

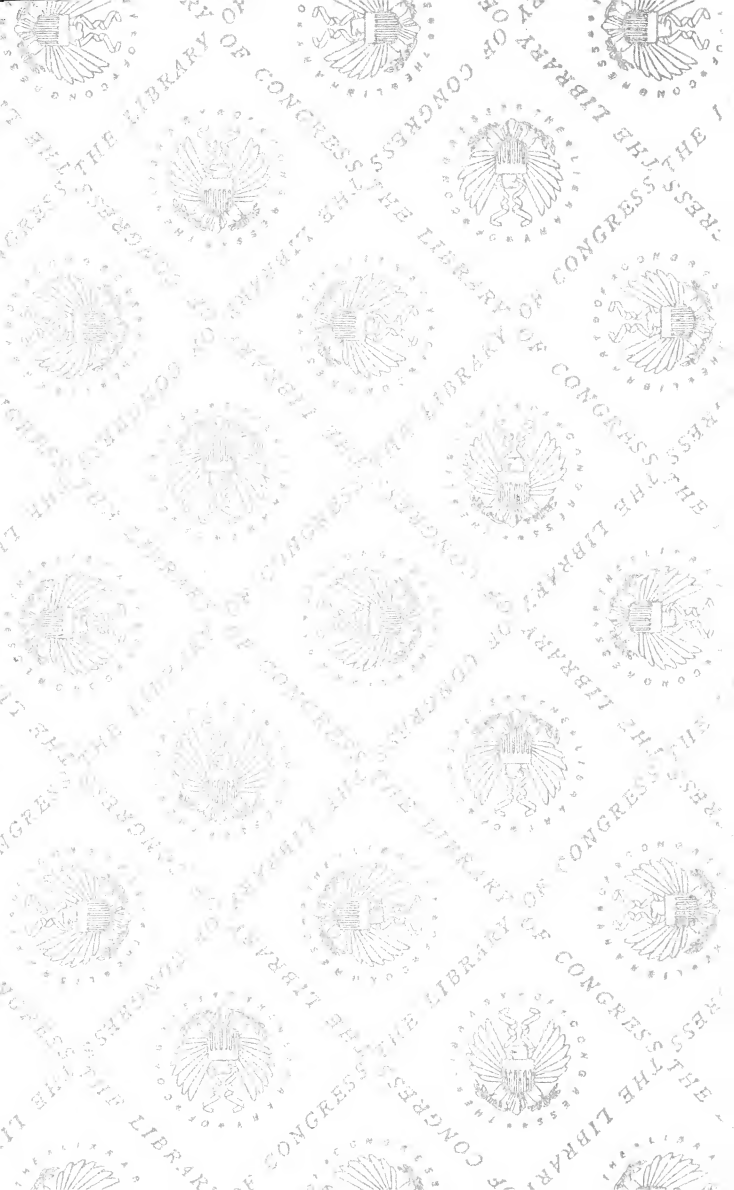
DG 975

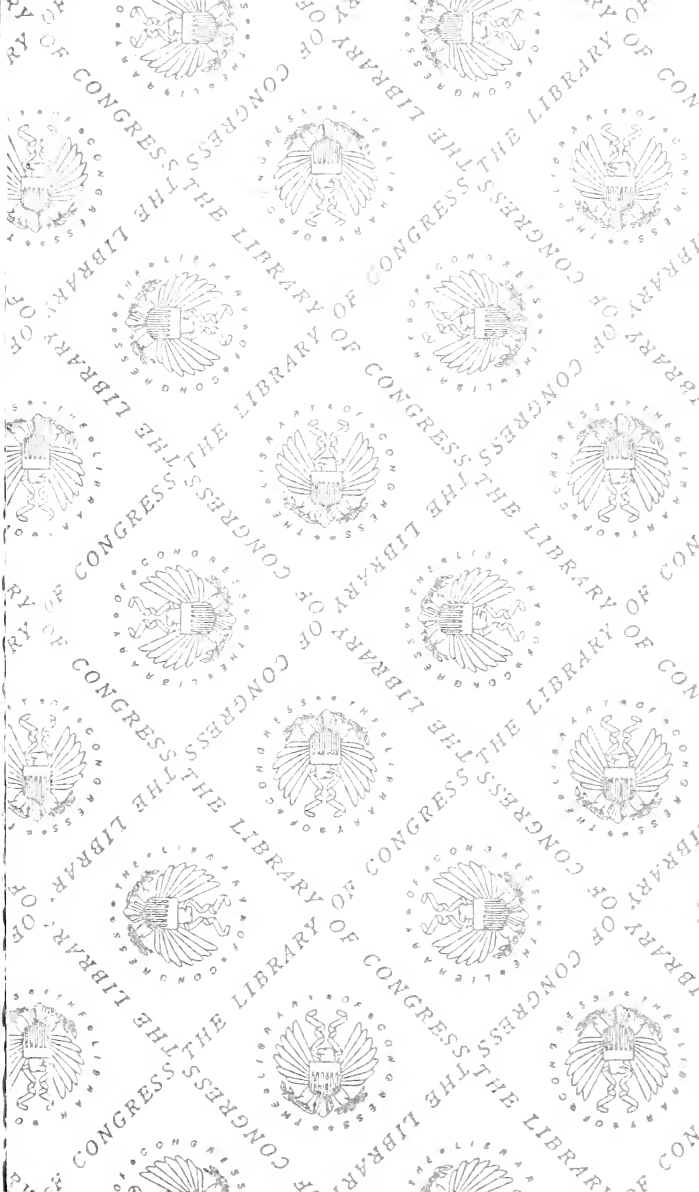
.C2 G8

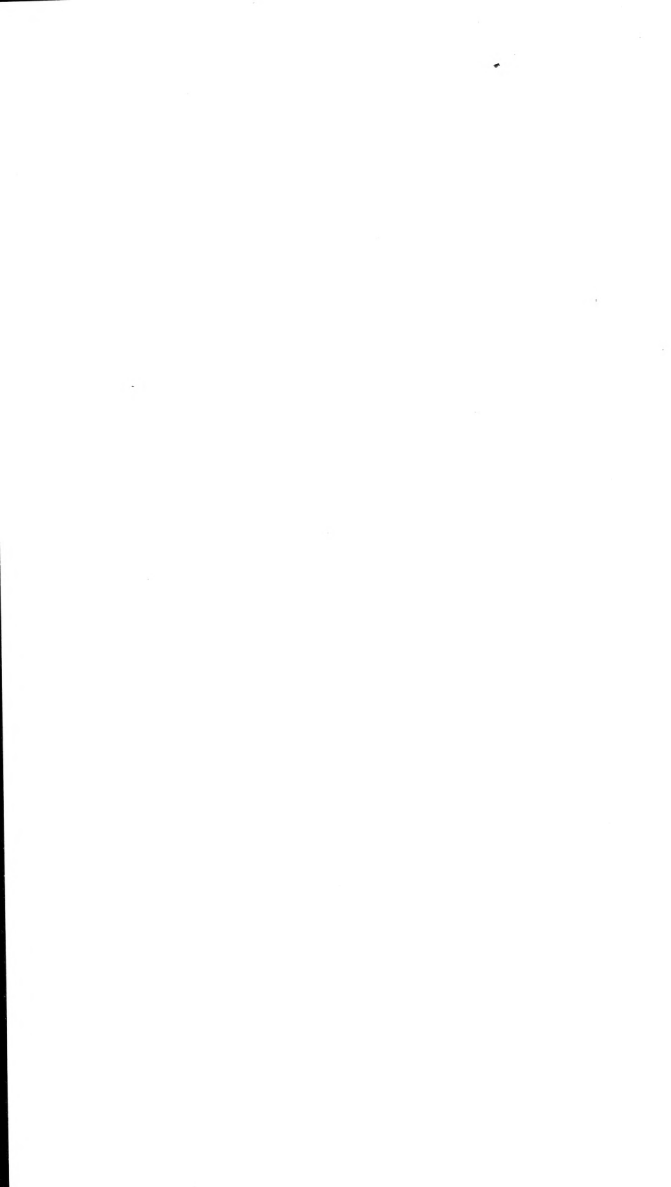
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



00017804492









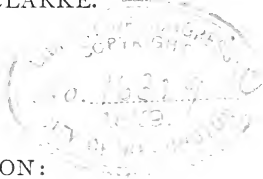
THE
ISLAND OF CAPRI.

BY
✓
FERDINAND GREGOROVIVS.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN,
BY THE AUTHOR'S PERMISSION,

BY
LILIAN CLARKE.

BOSTON:
LEE AND SHEPARD, PUBLISHERS.
NEW YORK:
CHARLES T. DILLINGHAM.
1879.



COPYRIGHT, 1879,
By LEE & SHEPARD.

All rights reserved.

7071
122
04-20

PREFACE.

THE writings of Gregorovius, well known in Europe, are less familiar to American readers. This is, I believe, the first translation which has appeared in America of any of the books of this interesting writer. It is a single chapter of his charming work called "Wanderjahre in Italien." Those who may be led by its perusal to seek the other productions of this author will enjoy the same pleasure which the translator has felt in her present labor.

The view of Tiberius taken by Gregorovius, though it is generally received, has, as is well known, been seriously questioned by recent scholars. But the translator has not felt at liberty to modify the expressions of the author on this subject.

L. C.



THE ISLAND OF CAPRI.

A WHOLE summer month I lived upon the Island of Capri, and enjoyed to the full the magical loneliness of the sea. Now I would gladly retain these enchanted visions ; but the stillness, the beauty, the mystery, is hardly to be told in words.

Jean Paul has compared Capri with a sphinx : to me, when I gazed at it from the mainland, the beautiful island seemed like an antique sarcophagus, on whose sides are carved the serpent-haired Eumenides ; but above, on the lid, lies Tiberius. And so this classically-formed island constantly attracted me by its shape, by its loneliness, and by the dim memories of that Emperor of Rome, who, of the world that belonged to him, chose for his own only this rock.

It was on a Sunday, and the clearest morning, that we stepped into a boat at Sorrento, and were rowed to Capri. The sea was as still as the sky,

and all in the far distance lost in a dreamy haze. But Capri lay before us, large and stern, with its battlements of unbending cliffs and peaks, the melancholy wildness of its mountains, and the rugged steepness of its dizzy precipices of red limestone. Upon the heights, brown *Castelle*, now fallen to ruin ; forsaken redoubts, with their abandoned cannon, now covered by the smiling yellow flowers of the wild broom ; cliffs, waste and wild, springing high into the air, around which the sea-hawk flutters, — the dwelling of the sun and of birds, as *Æschylus* says ; caves, deep below, dimly lighted, and full of mystery ; but above, on the bent back of the island, a cheerful little town, with white, domed houses, with high walls, and a domed church-tower. Below, the harbor of the fishermen, with its narrow beach of white sand, and boats ranged in many rows.

The bells were ringing and echoing as we approached the land ; and upon the beach stood a pretty fisher-girl, holding a little bench of wood, which she pushed into the water as the boat touched the sand, so that we might land dry-footed. And as I sprang upon the shore, upon this wonderful Capri, which in the North I had so often pictured to myself, I felt immediately at home. All was still and quiet ; scarcely a fisherman to be

seen, only two or three children bathing from a cliff, a few fisher-girls upon the beach, the rocks around, stern and silent. I had entered a wild and enchanted solitude. A steep and difficult path leads from the shore, between garden-walls, directly up to the little town of Capri. Among the rocks are gardens, with olive-trees, orange-trees, and grape-vines; but they strike the eye as being somewhat thin and scanty, if accustomed to the luxuriance of the Campanian landscape. The very trees appear to be hermits upon Capri.

Crossing the wooden bridge, and entering the town itself, through the ancient gate, the mind receives the most cheerful impression of a life of seclusion from the world, and the most unique picture of peace, childlike simplicity, and freedom from care. For here, in a very small *piazza*, peasants, in their holiday clothes, are sitting gossiping on the stone steps of the church; there, children are playing, full of noise and glee; and the little square itself looks as if the children had built it in their play. The houses are small, with domes and flat roofs, and almost every house has a vine trained over it.

Through narrow streets, where no wagon has ever passed, we walk to the Locanda of Don Michele Pagano, in front of which a royal palm-tree lifts its

majestic head. Here, also, it seems as if we were entering the most peaceful retreat,— an inn for pilgrims, with the staff and cockle-hat.

We had hardly entered our rooms, before a murmuring song enticed us out into the street again. It was Sunday, and there could not fail to be some procession ; but how strange and fantastic was the sight ! Men and women in white capuchin hoods and white veils walked behind the cross. Around the white hoods were twined green wreaths, made of the thorny blackberry-vine ; and the rope upon the shoulder showed that it was done as a penance, for this ceremony is supposed to have influence upon the grape-disease. So they passed, singing through the streets ; and these vine-crowned figures looked so heathenish, that they seemed like a procession of the priests of Bacchus, going, crowned with vine-leaves, to a temple of the heathen god. Almost all the men wore these wreaths, even those who did not have the cowl of the brotherhood. I was especially struck with the head of an old soldier, with silver-white hair and beard, who appeared, under his blackberry-wreath, exactly like a satyr. Behind the men came the women and girls in their long white veils ; and as the streets are so narrow that only two human beings can walk side by side in one of them, they were filled from one

wall of the town to the other while the procession passed through.

This was my welcome to Capri. I afterward lived there the happiest days. And because there is hardly any other place in the world over which I have wandered and climbed so joyfully, scaling all the heights, and descending into the deepest grottoes that are accessible, and because Capri and its inhabitants became so exceedingly dear to me, I will make this little picture of the island, as is the custom of grateful sailors, who set up a votive tablet, and write under it, *Votum fecit, gratiam recepit.*

By the Greeks and Romans the island was called Caprea, or Capreä. Scholars have derived the name from the Latin, where it signifies "The Island of the Goat." Others suppose it to be of Phœnician origin: according to these, it comes from the Phœnician word Caprain, which is translated, "Two Cities," or "A Double City." The Greeks looked upon it as an island of sirens; and to this day one spot upon the shore retains the name La Sirena. But the "Isles of the Sirens" of Homer, as they were once considered, lie opposite to Capri, on the side of the Cape of Minerva, toward Amalfi; and this cape, called to-day Capo di Campanella, was thought to be the Island of Circe. Thus all

around is Odyssean fable-land, the sea-home of the sirens among the beautiful waves, — sirens whose song allured the sailor, when, on leaving the Bay of Posidonia, he passed by the steep cliffs of the island.

It is not known when Capri received her first inhabitants. Perhaps it was some of her Oscan neighbors from the mainland that first settled here. That the Phœnicians also founded colonies here is universally allowed, and to them is ascribed the foundation of both cities ; for the island, divided by nature into an upper and a lower part, shows, that even in old times there were two cities ; and Strabo says, “ Capri possessed in ancient times two cities, afterward only one.”

Later came the Greeks into the beautiful water-basin of Naples, the Crater as it is called by old geographers, and settled along the coasts and on the islands. But the Teleboans, men of Taphian or Acarnanian origin, went to Capri, as is related by Virgil and Tacitus. The first Greek ruler of the island was called Telone.

At this period, about the eighth century before the Christian era, the Greeks founded colonies along the bays of Posidonia and of Naples. They built Cumæ and Neapolis, and took possession of the islands of this beautiful sea. To the highest

part of Capri they gave the name Anacapri, or the Upper Town of Capri, which it retains to this day. If you listen to the conversation of the present inhabitants of Capri, you hear many Grecian forms of speech ; and, if you look into their faces, you notice, especially in the dark, low-browed, finely-cut features of the women, traces of their Hellenic origin, — an impression which is strengthened by the graceful arrangement of the hair, gathered simply into a knot low down at the back of the head, and through the exquisite draping of the mucador, or headkerchief. But the Greeks, although they retained possession of the island after the Roman era, are yet very distant ancestors of the present inhabitants, in whose veins runs mixed blood, as is the case with the Neapolitans. Nevertheless, the Greeks were the ancestors of this people, whose gentleness and grace of manner now fascinates the stranger, makes of these bare rocks a lovely idyl, and even throws a softening charm around the memory of the fearful demon Tiberius.

At this time, the Greeks built upon Capri temples of which no trace remains ; and it is said that the youth of the island were remarkably skilful in the Greek wrestling-games, which they practised in the palæstra. Augustus himself took pleasure in the gymnastic games of the youth of Capri, for

in his time the island was still Greek in its character. It belonged then to the Greek city Neapolis. Augustus fell in love with Capri. He resigned to the Neapolitans the blooming Island of Ischia, and received in exchange the classically formed rocks of Capri. At the very moment when he stepped from the boat upon the shore of the island, he received news of a good omen : an evergreen oak, withered with age, had suddenly put forth green leaves. This pleased the emperor so much, that he decided upon the exchange.

Augustus came, enfeebled by age, to breathe the health-restoring air of Campania. The balmy air of the cool island, the strange beauty of the rocks, the Greek character of the inhabitants, all delighted him. He built for himself in Capri a villa, and laid out gardens. According to the opinion of antiquarians, this country-house stood where to-day are seen the mighty ruins of the Villa di Giove, which is known to the common people as the Villa of Tiberius *par excellence*. The situation is enchanting, being on the highest point of the eastern shore, where the view includes in one mighty sweep both bays and the boundless Sicilian Sea. But all traces of Augustus have vanished from the island, lost among the fearful traditions of Tiberius ; and so it is no longer known what, nor how extensively,

Augustus built there, nor how often he himself came to the island.

Doubtless these visits were made during the last years of his life. According to Suetonius, he, shortly before his death, spent four days upon Capri, in company with Tiberius and the astrologer Thrasyllus, giving himself up entirely to repose and relaxation. "As he happened to sail by the Bay of Puteoli, an Alexandrian ship had just landed, whose passengers and crew dressed themselves in white garments with chaplets upon their heads, and, offering incense, loaded him with praises and joyful acclamations, since from him they had received life, a prosperous voyage, freedom, and good fortune. This pleased him so much, that he divided among his followers four hundred pieces of gold, and caused them to bind themselves by oath to use this gold for no other purpose than to buy the wares of the Alexandrians. And, each day that the merchants remained, he distributed other gifts of togas and pallia, and commanded that the Romans should use the Greek, and the Greeks the Roman dress and language. He likewise constantly attended the exercises of the Ephebi, according to an ancient custom still continued at Capri. He gave them a banquet in his own presence, and not only permitted, but required, from them the utmost freedom in jesting with each

other, and in snatching apples and fruit and presents thrown to them, from each other's hands. He looked coldly upon no kind of cheerful amusement. An island lying near Capri he called Apragopolis, on account of the do-nothing character of those of his followers who had emigrated thither. A favorite of his, one Masgaba, he used to call *Ktistes*, as if he had been the founder of the island. And observing from his room a crowd of people with torches, surrounding the tomb of this Masgaba, who had died the year before, he spoke aloud this line, which he had made extempore, —

‘Blazing with lights, I see the founder’s tomb;’

then turning to Thrasyllus, a companion of Tiberius, who reclined on the other side of the table, he asked him (who knew nothing of the matter) from what poet the line was quoted. As Thrasyllus hesitated, Augustus added a second line, —

‘Honored with torches Masgaba you see,’

and put the same question to him concerning that also. The latter answered only, that, whoever might be the author, the lines were admirable. Augustus then burst into a laugh, and overflowed with merriment.”

Shortly afterward he went to Naples, and soon died at Nola. This is what Suetonius relates of the

last sojourn of the emperor upon Capri. It is very little, and yet it is worth much to us to have this pleasant picture of the gray-haired Augustus, and of his merry jokes with the inhabitants of the island. And the picture is doubly attractive from the contrast with Tiberius; for now follows — the aged Tiberius upon Capri.

This little island was, for eleven years, Rome and the centre of the world. Time itself was hoary with age, like the hermit of these rocky cliffs; history, only a gloomy monologue of the man with the Medusa head.

When I sit here upon the ruins of the Villa of Zeus, and look across the sparkling bay, it seems as if the smoking Vesuvius were the Tiberius of Nature, and I think Tiberius himself must often have sat here wrapped in his own thoughts, looked across to Vesuvius, and in his fiendish atheism feasted his eyes upon the sight of his emblem, the Demon of Destruction. Yes, if we look first at the volcano, and then at that elysian Campania at its feet, and at this friendly sea breathing out light, the lonely mountain, which raises itself so grimly, towering above the whole country, seems a type of the history of the human race, and this whole great theatre of Naples to be a poem of nature full of the deepest meaning. Just so gloomy, malignant, and

lonely as the volcano above the paradise at its feet, the Hermit of Capri once towered above the beautiful world which he governed. The soul of the human monster boils within him ; and, if the rage for destruction breaks its boundaries, it scatters abroad devastation of cities, sentences of death, flight and exile, and buries the earth in thick darkness.

His memory yet lives among the common people. Thousands of years will not efface it ; for that which is terrible makes a more lasting impression on the mind than that which is kindly. They call him here *Timberio*, and call Capri *Crap* ; and, wherever you go upon the island, you see traces of this human tiger. Even the far-famed wine of Capri is here called the Tears of Tiberius, as that of Vesuvius is called the Tears of Christ. I think the tears wept by a man like Tiberius must be exceedingly precious among the treasures of Nature.

I find here a strange popular belief which has surprised me not a little. It is maintained by the common people, that, deep below the mountain on which are the ruins of the Villa of Tiberius, the emperor is seated upon a colossal bronze horse, himself a statue of bronze, with diamond eyes : the gigantic horse also has eyes of diamond. A youth who crept into a fissure of the rock is said to have

seen him ; but the trace of the spot where he entered was lost immediately. I heard the tradition from the old Franciscan monk who now lives as a hermit among the ruins of the villa ; and I also found it in Mangone's book upon Capri. It recalls the tradition of the Emperor Rothbart in Kyffhäusern ; but the people will hardly desire the recall to life of the Emperor Tiberius.

He came to the island in the year 26 A.D., and lived here eleven long years, until he died by suffocation at Misenum, during a short absence. He had transformed the whole island into a pleasure-grove of Venus and an Olympus of all the gods. The twelve villas consecrated to the higher gods, together with other beautiful buildings, must, with the sublime rocks, have given to the island an enchantingly beautiful aspect. To-day the island is strewn with ruins, and many are still hidden in the earth under the vineyards. The arches and vaults of these castles of pleasure now yawn, hollow and ghostlike, out of the rubbish upon the hills, like the remains of a deserted banquet-hall, dreary to behold, since it besieges the fancy at the same time with images fantastic and melancholy, with visions of beauty and pleasure, and of desolation.

When the fearful one was dead, the beautiful theatre remained empty of its delights ; the glory

of Capri declined. The people say that Romans came to the island, and tore down the buildings. History, it is true, says nothing of this ; but neither does it mention that Capri was visited by the successors of Tiberius. Caligula had been with him upon the island ; here for the first time was shaved, and assumed the toga ; and formed himself after the school of his uncle. The gormandizer Vitellius also, as a youth, lived on Capri. Later, in the time of Commodus, Crispina his wife, and daughter Lucilla, endured a weary banishment on this island, as is related by Dio Cassius ; and a bas-relief found upon Capri during the preceding century confirms this story. It represents both princesses in the attitude of suppliants asking protection.

Afterward the island shared the fate of the neighboring country along the coast. After the fall of Rome, it first fell into the hands of the barbarians, then came into the possession of the Greeks, as did Naples itself. It was the property of the Greek Duke of Naples, and in the ninth century passed into the hands of the then flourishing republic of Amalfi, which received it as a gift from the Emperor Louis. ✕

At the beginning of the Norman Conquest, in the south of Italy, Capri was held by the brave Roger of Sicily, who seized the island from Amalfi, and so

it was, in turn, the property of the Normans, the House of Hohenstaufen, the Houses of Anjou and of Aragon, and governed by their deputies. In the year 1806 the English took it from the Neapolitans. They occupied it in the name of King Ferdinand of Sicily, strengthened the fortifications, and gave it into the command of that Sir Hudson Lowe who was later to become immortal as the jailer of St. Helena. The English ruled in Capri almost three years, until the Muratists by a bold stroke seized the island. It was the historian Coletta, then engineer under Murat, who first reconnoitred Capri, and marked the spot where the rocky shore could be scaled. On the 4th of October, 1808, the island was taken, after a fierce battle, and Sir Hudson Lowe carried prisoner to Naples.

These statistics may be of service to us in giving information of the historical changes undergone by Capri. Events have passed by, leaving no impression, not even the slightest trace, on the minds of the people. All that survives is the memory of the fearful Tiberius ; and often it seemed strange to me to hear from the lips of children at their games the name of the most terrible character of history. You hear of him everywhere, because he became so united with the place. The life of this one man

has pervaded the whole island, and added to the pensive character of its scenery the tragic force of history. This gives to Capri the charm of tragedy for those who are impressionable to what is wild and gloomy in nature and in history. Here lie in strange contrast the awful and the beautiful,—the smiling green valley, close by the steep walls of rock, which cut through the cheerful plant-life, and tower upward to the clouds, bare and gigantic ; and this every-day type of a simple, natural human life, giving beauty to virtue and poverty, and ennobling labor, finds its sharpest contrast in the constantly recurring image of Tiberius, the man of most unnatural qualities, and inhuman wickedness.

The character of these contrasts, and the wonderful manner in which Nature has united these conflicting elements into one plastic whole, is what chiefly excites my astonishment. There are here so many bare rocks, that upon large flat plains they would produce an effect of dreary desolation ; but it is otherwise upon Capri. Nature here guards against monotonous bareness by beauty of line and form ; against deadness, by warmth of color ; against dryness, by scattered greenness and the ornament of flowering plants. And so she combines all these peculiar features,—bare wastes, ruins, sharp peaks, all forms of monotony and

nakedness in miniature, — and of the whole forms an enchanting picture, in which what is large and imposing retains its character, and the gloomy and awful remains gloomy and awful, and yet, through the power of form, has all the charm of grace. All produces a cheerful impression: the strong becomes the peaceful; desolation is softened into an aspect of pleasant seclusion. Mountains, cliffs, and valleys affect the mind as if by a secret charm; they form, as it were, the cell of a recluse, through the lattice of which is seen the most beautiful bay in the world; and this is again held embraced by silent, dreamy shores; and so it is, in truth, a magic ring by which you are encircled.

The similarity of the scenery of Capri to that of Sicily is striking. It is a perfect model of Sicily in miniature, not only on account of the dryness of the soil, but also from the glowing red color of the limestone, the fantastic shapes of the cliffs, and even on account of the vegetation, which is here quite Southern in its character, but not luxuriant. Between the red stones, as if sown in the folds of the mountain, grow all the sweet-scented herbs and grasses of the most southern islands of Europe, perfuming the air with their fragrant breath. There is found the myrtle, the citisus, the rue and rosemary, the wild basil and *albatro*, and the flowering

heath ; the blackberry and the ivy, and the clematis-vine throw their graceful creepers around the ruins and cliffs ; and the golden-yellow broom hangs in full clusters from all the heights. But the most beautiful plant of Capri, which, as it happens, takes its name from the island, is not the caprifolium, or geissblatt, but the caper-bush : it hangs from all the walls and ledges of rock, and adorns them with its white flowers full of long lilac-colored stamens. Along the slopes, terraces have been formed with great pains, and gardens laid out in the small level spaces thus procured. There thrives every fruit and every tree of the Campania. There grow the oak and mulberry tree in great profusion ; the olive, strong, branching, and loaded with fruit ; the cypress and pine, sparingly ; the carob-tree, large and powerful ; everywhere, the fig, fruitful, and in great profusion ; more scantily, the chestnut and walnut, but the orange and lemon in great abundance, the fruit attaining in these gardens to an astonishing size and beauty, sometimes growing as large as a child's head. The grape does not attain to the Bacchic luxuriance of the grape-vine of Campania, but is heavy with clusters, whose precious and far-famed fiery wine the glow of the sun has brought to perfection. What also gives to this little island the character of Sicily is the great

profusion of the prickly-pear: its fantastic African shape suits well with the dryness of the rocky landscape and the sunny glow of its tropical coloring.

Nature having thus sung together this enchanted island into harmonious shape and color, she seems to have created the inhabitants in the same way, and given to them their fanciful and idyllic character. The little town of Capri, which stretches itself in a line along the mountain-ridge, between the hills of San Michele and Castello, is very unique in its aspect. The houses, small and white, have a flat roof, in the middle of which rises a little dome; upon this flat space flowers are placed, and there the inhabitants sit in the cool of the evening, and look out upon the wide world and the rose-tinged sea. All the rooms are arched, like the subterranean parts of the villas of the time of Tiberius. The house itself is either surrounded by a terrace, or else opens upon an arched loggia or veranda, which has a very pleasant aspect, and is generally covered by a grape-vine, and luxuriantly adorned by the most beautiful flowers, — blue hortensias, purple-red pinks, and rose-colored oleanders. If the house opens upon the garden, the *pergola*, or arbor of grape-vines, is found before the door. This *pergola* is the most beautiful ornament of these island dwellings; for it consists of a double

row of white, plastered pillars, which support the roof of the arbor. These give to the poorest house a touch of elegance, and impart to the architecture something antique and ideal. These rows of pillars, with grape-vines twining around them, often look like the arcades of a temple. They call to mind the pillars of the houses of Pompeii. Here and there in the gardens stands a palm-tree : the finest of all grows in the garden of the innkeeper, Pagano, whose house is called the Palace by the other inhabitants of Capri.

Outside of the little city dwell vine-cultivators, scattered about in their farm-houses, in gardens, upon small eminences, or at the foot of some rock quite covered and buried with grape-vines, or with the flowering oleander. Each one of these little houses seems like an asylum of the blessed, and the abode of cloistered peace.

The inhabitants of Capri, about two thousand in number, are the most peacefully happy people in the world, — courteous in their manners, full of grace and vivacity, very poor, active, and industrious. They are either farmers, vine-cultivators, or fishermen ; and these latter possess in common their boats and the fish that they take. The other inhabitants are, for the most part, only tenant-farmers ; for most of the farms belong to Neapolitans. The

farmer pays yearly eighty or one hundred Neapolitan ducats of rent, which he must make, together with what his own subsistence costs, from his vineyards, olives, and fruit-trees. If the vine-crop should fail, as it did three years ago, the tenant becomes poor ; and it is piteous to hear the complaints of these poor vine-growers, and to see the vineyards desolated by the grape-disease. I found women, who said to me, weeping, that they had sold all their necklaces, rings, and ear-rings ; and this is a sign of great poverty, for only the direst necessity will force the women to part with their ornaments. The ornaments are worn at all times and places ; so that you see the striking incongruity of a young girl performing the most humble services decked out in long golden ear-rings, and with a golden heart upon her rebast. This is her treasure, frequently her only possession ; but the ornament is often neither of the strongest nor the finest gold.

The cattle of Capri are few ; but every year more than two hundred are brought over from the mainland : and the cheese of the island is quite famous. In the autumn and spring the inhabitants draw a part of their subsistence from the birds which they shoot. At these seasons, flocks of birds-of-passage, chiefly quails, fly over the island on their way from

the south to the north, and *vice versâ*. During their journey the poor birds stop to rest on these inhospitable shores, and are killed in multitudes, seized, or taken in nets. With this exception, there is no hunting on the island, and no fourfooted prey, — neither fox nor marten, — except a great multitude of rabbits, which at night hop out of the crevices of the rocks, and run into the fields, to steal their scanty portion from the poverty of the farmer. These rabbits are the most unlucky creatures on the island. The poor rogues pay a dear price for their hermitages.

The sea secures to the inhabitants of Capri an unfailing source of livelihood. The fisherman here finds prey of every sort,—the tunny and the sword-fish, the beautiful murena, but especially the sardine and the calamajo, or cuttle-fish. This latter is usually taken at night. As soon as it is dark, the fishermen go out upon the sea, and attract the fish to the surface by the light of a torch. The frightful polyp-like animal then clutches at the spikes of a barbed stick, and impales itself thereon. The fisherman remains all night upon the sea, and comes home only at sunrise ; then he must attend to the drying of the net and the mending of the broken meshes. He sleeps a few hours, and must make ready again for the sea. It is a laborious and fati-

guing life ; the sea often deceitful, and the contents of a net, belonging to a whole society of fisherman, often worth not more than two carlini.

The busy life of the Marina Grande, where stands a row of houses, — the only harbor of the island, — affords constantly an amusing and interesting spectacle. The fishermen are powerful men, often very handsome, of herculean proportions, with muscular limbs and a dark-brown complexion, and faces full of energy, looking very bold and striking under the Phrygian cap which they wear. If the sea is disturbed, they rejoice in its wild motion, as they draw the boats through the surf upon the beach. This latter is small, and not secure from the beating of the waves, and not large enough to afford room for all the boats : on this account each boat has a separate compartment protected by walls, in which it is fastened during a storm. There are about a hundred boats upon the beach, besides three larger ones, which are made use of in crossing the bay between Naples and Capri. The harborless shore is not adapted to sail-boats. Every Tuesday and Friday, the return boat comes from Naples, whither it went the day before. Then there are the gayest scenes upon the shore ; for the women and young girls of Anacapri come down the great stone steps to receive what the boat has

brought for them. If the sea is disturbed, the younger fishermen spring out into the waves before the boat stops. They plunge head-foremost into the water, like ducks diving. Those in the boat throw rope and oar to them ; and the boat is gradually lightened, as, one after another, they spring out of it. Those on shore, with shouts and cries, pull the boat, by means of the rope, up upon the beach ; and the voice of the *padrone* is heard above the rushing of the surf and the wild shouts of the men, who are usually roused into a state of great excitement. On the shore, the women are waiting to receive the boat's cargo. This usually consists of articles for family use, — vegetables, melons, biscuits, or clothes and household utensils. Also many wreaths and bouquets of flowers are brought from Naples, and newly-published songs from the quay Santa Lucia. But the stranger visiting Capri seats himself on one of the fragments of rock on the shore, and breaks open the letter, which has just been brought for him with the boat's cargo.

Almost all the boats on the shore belong to the fishermen of Capri ; only a few, to those who live above in Anacapri. A natural barrier exists between this town and the sea ; for it is situated on the highest point of the island, just below the peak of Solaro. On the other hand, many of the active

young men of Anacapri, a larger number than those of Capri, leave the island, and go to other places to search for coral. Every year about two hundred go away for this purpose. To supply the market of the coral-merchants in Torre del Greco, they venture in their boats as far as the straits of Bonifazio and the coasts of Africa. They go in March, and come back in October. On their return, they find whatever Fate has accomplished in their little world since their departure, — joy or sorrow, faith or perfidy, new life, or recent death. If they have gained a hundred ducats, they are enabled to marry their sweetheart; for in Capri a hundred ducats places a man in such a position that he can afford to marry. An artist told me that he had had the following conversation with the youth who carried his easel: —

Young Man. — Have you a wife, signor? *Artist.* — No. *Young Man.* — Have you not then a hundred ducats? *Artist.* — Yes, I have a hundred ducats. *Young Man (much astonished).* — How, signor! you have a hundred ducats, and are not married?

I was pleasantly reminded of these exiled coral-fishers, when one day, on the staircase leading to Anacapri, a young girl offered me for sale some Arabian coins. Her brother had, the year before,

brought them to her as a present, from "the heathen countries." I bought them of her as a memento, and as lucky-pence, which must have some mysterious story attached to them.

The coral-trade is also pursued on the shores of Capri itself. The children and fisher-girls collect bits of coral; they weave very small baskets of straw, and in these they place pieces of red coral, seahorses, starfish, and small bright-colored shells; and, when you walk along the shore, they step before you, and with laughing eyes offer you for sale the dainty little basket, and it is impossible not to buy it.

Yes, every thing here is small, dainty, and graceful; and the work that employs the young girls in their little houses, where they reel or spin the beautiful golden-yellow silk, or weave it into gay ribbons, is quite fascinating. The industry of the women consists here in the manufacture of silk, chiefly weaving it into ribbons, as well above, in Anacapri, as below. Many looms are there employed. The young girls sit at their work from sunrise until dark. The cotton or silk is provided by the merchants of Naples, who pay scantily for the work. The spinners weave ribbons of all colors. It is very pleasant to watch this quiet, Homeric pursuit carried on by these charming, womanly figures in the little

vaulted chambers, or on the terraces, among the blooming flowers, and in sight of the sea. It is like living in a fairy-tale, and it is a very pleasant amusement to converse with these little black-browed Circes.

There is in Capri a lonely house upon a hill. Within it sit four maidens together, in sisterly fashion, and ceaselessly weave together silk and straw for ladies' bonnets. These four young girls are the *élite* of the maiden world of Capri. Their room is the gathering-place for the other young girls of the island. Strangers also pay them visits. The artists call them the Four Altars, from the honors that are paid to them; but my host has named them the Four Seasons. As I sat in their room one day, I noticed a slip of paper which one of the sisters had carefully fastened to her loom. Upon it was painted a spray of ivy, and the following line from Sophocles written beneath it, — the line that begins the *Cædipus Tyrannus* : —

— “ὦ τέκνα, Κάδμου τοῦ πάλαι νέα τροφή,”

“O children, the young brood of the old Cadmus!”

The spinner asked me to explain to her what the writing meant; for it had been written by an Englishman who had been there. I told her the words signified “O child, thou art by day my

temple, and by night my star !” She smiled, and was contented.

I have often, in the mountains of Italy, been struck and charmed by the *naïveté* of the people ; but I think I never found any more *naïve* than these. Separation from the rest of the world has preserved their gentleness of manner and the charm of unperverted nature. Nothing is known here of the crimes of civilization. All is peace, poverty, and industry. The stranger is received as a friend, and feels at home immediately ; and indeed there cannot be a sharper contrast than between the world of Capri and that of Naples.

The young girls of Capri are not so much beautiful, as graceful and charming. Their features often show signs of the mingling of different races. The lines of these low-browed, striking faces are regular, and often very noble. The eyes, of a sparkling black or tender gray, the brown complexion, the black hair, the folds of the headkerchief, the coral ornaments, and golden ear-rings, give to the face something of an Oriental character. I often saw, especially in the remote and secluded Anacapri, faces of a wild, strange beauty ; and when such a face looked up from the loom, and out from the dimly-lighted room, — the hair in picturesque confusion, the eyebrows black, and

sharply drawn, and the eyes large, and flashing fire,—I seemed to see before me the face of one of the daughters of Danäus. In Capri, on the other hand, are seen faces which recall Perugino and Pinturicchio, and have often a most striking and poetic expression. The hair is worn with careless grace, and is most beautiful, in Anacapri, knotted low upon the head, and with a silver arrow thrust through it. Often the headkerchief is arranged like a turban; and then the wearer may easily be taken for the inhabitant of another zone. But the greatest ornament of the women of Capri, and more precious than gold, is their teeth. I think the reason the inhabitants of Capri have such beautiful teeth is that they have so little to bite.

These charming figures ought to be seen in groups, or watched when they come up the hill, carrying on their head the water-pitcher of antique form, or baskets filled with earth or stones: they are so poor that they are glad to earn a trifling sum by carrying burdens. The young girl of Capri is the only beast of burden on the island; and thus you may see the most lovely children, from fourteen to twenty years old, Gabriella, Costanziella, Maria Antonia, Concetta, Teresa,—whose heads, in England, France, or Germany, would be objects of admiration in many a picture-gallery,—

carrying up from the seashore, on these very heads, burdens for which the strength of a man would seem hardly sufficient.

Two weeks ago a boat from Naples came to the island, and unloaded upon the shore a cargo of tufa stone which was to be used for the rebuilding of the old convent. Within five days, these stones were all carried up to the convent on the heads of young girls. The path is so steep, that I murmured at it every day, returning fresh from my bath, with nothing to carry. One reaches the top quite out of breath. But during five days these girls, perhaps thirty in all, were continually employed in carrying stones up this path. They usually carried two at once ; the feebler only one. To try their weight, I lifted one of these stones, and, by exerting all the strength of both arms, I succeeded in raising it high enough to place it upon one of these charming heads ; and this seemed to me a very unknightly service to render. These simple children, after resting a few minutes on the way, often begged the passers-by to help them up with their load. They went to their Sisyphus labor before the sun rose, and left off only when it sank, in a wide glow of purple, behind the distant island of Ponza. Thus laden, they, every day in the heat of August, climbed the hill sixteen times.

When they took the stones from the shore, a clerk stood there who kept the account, and above, on La Certosa, another, who wrote each number gravely in his book. Gabriella has twice ten stones inscribed upon the book of fate ; the fair Costanziella, alas, only ten ! Their wages were about twenty-five cents a day. In their simplicity, these children had neglected to make any contract with their employer ; and, when asked what they were to receive for such fatiguing labor, they replied, " We think probably a carlino a day, or else bread from Castellamare to the same amount : Sunday we shall receive our pay."

During these days, the island presented an especially beautiful appearance, and the artists hastened eagerly to sketch these graceful figures. As the tufa of Herculaneum is of a beautiful cool gray color, it made the most charming combinations, in contrast with the red headkerchief, and supported on the head by one or both hands. These files of poor wandering stone-carriers seemed to me to take every variety of graceful and unique pose, resembling the antique figures of the Canephoraë, or the daughters of Egypt carrying stones for the Egyptian Pyramids. Indeed, I could never look at them without wonder and emotion. They laughed and jested under their burdens, and were

as bright and charming as ever. It seemed to me that I had never seen a more beautiful picture of poverty. At noon-time I often saw the same young girls, sitting in a circle on the ground, taking their noonday repast under the shadow of a carob-tree. It consisted of half-ripe plums and dry bread ; and, when they had eaten this scanty meal, they rose, laughing and chattering, and, light as gazelles, descended the steps to resume their task.

If I wished to draw a picture of poverty, the most peaceful and cheerful that could be found, I should describe it in the person of the fair Costanziella. After she has spent a long hot day in transporting on her head a whole pyramid of stones from the shore up to the old picturesque convent, she reposes during the evening in the doorway of her house, and refreshes herself with the most beautiful music ; for she is an accomplished performer on the jews'-harp. She has played for me upon this instrument, with inimitable skill and grace, many charming airs, — all kinds of sea-fancies, songs of sirens in the Blue Grotto, songs without words, strange airs to which no mortal has yet given a name. She played them all in the most masterly manner ; while her dark eyes sparkled like a siren's, and her black, rippling hair clustered around her forehead as if each lock were dancing for pleasure. When Costanziella had

finished her concert, she invited me, in the most courteous manner, to share with herself and her mother the evening meal; the table being spread upon the roof above. The repast consisted of ripe Indian figs, from the single cactus-tree which grew before the house, which she had very skilfully cut off with a knife, without wounding her little finger with the thorns. Literary subjects we did not discuss. Costanziella knew nothing of Schiller and Goethe; of English and French literature she was equally ignorant. Her whole literary world consisted of a few songs from the Bay of Naples. Her mother was like a picture to look at, but her conversation was chiefly upon different articles of food. Costanziella never ate meat. She carried stones all day, and in the evening played upon the jews'-harp, while her food consisted of dry bread, and potatoes with salt and oil. When I asked her whether she had ever in her life eaten roast meat, she laughed aloud. But neither Hebe nor Circe, nor the Diana of Delos, was fresher or more blooming, or possessed a greater wealth of clustering curls; and certainly none of these was more skilful upon the jews'-harp.

In Capri it is a common experience to be asked for a *Gran'* or *baiocco*, or *la Butiglia* as they call it. It is especially the children and young girls

who make this request. I will not call it begging, for it is not done in a begging manner. As they are poor, it is natural that others who have money should give to them ; and, if they receive nothing, they say, with a cheerful face, "*Addi, Signoria !*" You meet this demand at every step. I went one day into the schoolhouse at Anacapri ; and the whole school at once shouted from the benches, "*Signore, la Butiglia !*" and it seemed as if the schoolmaster himself came very near joining in the shout. If you enter a house, you may be sure of meeting a young girl, who will offer you a Basilicum flower or a pink. For this she expects something in return. The flower is a pretext for begging. But it is not always thus ; for, without this ceremony, they ask quite frankly and freely for the *Grano*. They are made happy by a few trifles bought occasionally from a peddler. They rejoice over pretty things, like children ; and one cannot help wishing for the treasures of a freedman of Tiberius to divide them among this friendly and grateful people.

Just now the topic of conversation is a marriage between an Englishman and a young girl of Capri. A rich Englishman fell so desperately in love with a poor young girl of the island, that for her sake he became a Catholic. The beautiful child is now in a convent at Naples ; but in the autumn she will

come back as a great lady to her new house on Mount Tuoro. The good fortune of the fair Anarella excites no envy, but the event is looked upon as something very extraordinary. Another Englishman has also given up his home to settle among these mountains. Capri is indeed a most peaceful refuge for men who are weary of life, and I know no other place in the world where one who has suffered shipwreck in the voyage of life may end his days so peacefully. This is the testimony also of the retired soldiers who live here.

Three hundred soldiers, either disabled by wounds or enfeebled by age, live in the soldiers' quarters at one end of the city. They give to the island quite the character of an asylum; for they are to be seen sitting or wandering everywhere, and heard singing their songs. Some of these are veterans of the time of Napoleon; others date from the revolution of 1848. These men come from all provinces of the kingdom: most of them are blind. As there are neither carriages nor horses on the island, they run no risk in wandering about alone. They walk through the streets without any guide, feeling their way along with a stick; and their blindness is scarcely noticeable. At the feast of St. Anna I saw a number of them leading the procession. They filed into the church one behind the other; and,

seeing them, I was reminded of the text, "Blessed are they who have not seen, and yet have believed." In the evening they enjoyed the fireworks in the little square, since they could at least hear the noise made by rockets and pinwheels. What a fate!—to be blind upon Capri, where the most enchanting prospect in the world lies spread out before you with all its wonderful play of color. It seems a bitter irony to walk for pleasure here without the power of sight. And yet these poor blind men walk a great deal, and seem to enjoy it: they have in fact a favorite promenade, the only path that is somewhat level, namely, the beautiful way through the fields, on the outskirts of the Valley of Tragara, under the olive-trees. The old men like to sit on stone seats in the gateway, listening to the steps of those who come in, or even outside of the gate, where the view of the bay, and of Naples in the distance with Vesuvius, and of the threefold peak of Solaro, with the dizzy staircase leading up to it, is most enchanting. In the midst of the blue haze of noonday, these peaks sparkle with dazzling splendor; but in the moonlight they are wrapped in glimmering veils of mist of magical beauty.

These blind soldiers are also fond of music. Every evening they give a concert. Two of them sit upon the terrace, before the soldiers' quarters;

one plays on the guitar, another blows upon a set of pipes. It is certainly the strangest music that was ever heard: it pierces the darkness of the night with its clear, wild echoes. Often the melancholy notes are accompanied by a song. With the same music the soldiers go out upon the piazza in the morning. The blind and the seeing, the crippled and the straight, all contentedly follow the band of their regiment, namely, the guitar-player and pipe-blower. And so, upon this hospitable island, even physical misfortune seems to be cheered, like poverty, and reconciled to fate.

Every thing here has a touch of the childlike; and, even in the faces of the handsome old men and women, you perceive this trait of childlike simplicity. Among the children, many, both boys and girls, are beautiful as pictures; and although they have grown up wild, and almost wholly untaught, their intelligence and quick perception are surprising. They each wear an amulet about the neck, — the younger ones a little horn, as charm against the evil eye; the elder, a coin with the Madonna upon it, or a little picture of the Madonna del Carmine, embroidered upon cloth.

I once saw the body of a child laid out in the church. It lay under a white covering strewed with flowers and confectionery. Probably the child

had never in his life enjoyed these luxuries: they are given to these poor fisher-children only after their death. The child was placed, without much ceremony, in the crypt of the church, where, according to an old custom, all the dead are buried. Only he who was in his life no Christian, that is, not a Catholic, receives a lonely grave in some beautiful spot above the sea.

Such are the people of Capri; and, as the narrow space brings everybody near together, after a few days the stranger shares the daily life of the inhabitants, and comes into friendly and confidential relations with them. Every feeling of strangeness vanishes so entirely, that he shortly falls into the habit of considering himself a member of the little community. In the tiny piazza by the gate all the business of life is carried on in public,—the sale of utensils of trade which show how few are the wants of the people, the celebration of the festivals on saint-days, the every-day enjoyments of repose and conversation after working-hours are over. Now and then the contemplative solitude is broken by the arrival of strangers, who take rooms at the Inn of Don Michele: they come to visit the curiosities of the island, and then disappear again. But there is a circle of guests who take their meals together at the same table: they

are, for the most part, artists of different nations ; and these guests soon become a characteristic feature of the island, for they are everywhere to be seen, sitting at their work, — painting one of the fascinating little houses, with the arbor of grapevines ; or a rock of fantastic shape ; or perhaps a group of trees, or a view of the shore.

But there is nothing more delightful than to stroll about on this beautiful turf, to climb along the cliffs, or to walk beside the fragrant sea, where the waves rush in, breaking into foam, and the seaweed gives out its sharp, almost overpowering scent. The silence and loneliness, the wide-spreading bay, with its far islands and distant shores, is wonderfully impressive ; and you can sit for hours on the rocks, and watch the play of color in the sea and sky.

I will now take you with me on an expedition around the whole island ; for I am everywhere quite at home. First we will go to the place where stood the old town of Capri, which has now disappeared, destroyed by the Saracens. But yonder, where the steep rocks of Anacapri abruptly rise into the air, are the very last remains of the old town of Capri, — the ancient Cathedral of San Costanzo still standing, surrounded by gardens. It was the oldest parish of the island, and the seat of

the bishop ; for Capri was made a bishopric in the tenth century, under the rule of the Archbishop of Amalfi, and remained so until 1799. After that, the bishop's seat was no longer filled ; but the Church of Capri was held as a collegiate under the Archbishop of Sorrento.

San Costanzo is small, clumsy-looking, and has the character of a village church. Around it old walls are still standing. A number of funeral urns, bas-reliefs, and old coins, have been found in the neighborhood ; and near by, in a vineyard, may still be seen a large marble sarcophagus which was disinterred some years ago. Since the antiquities of the island have been the object of especial research, a quantity of statues, bas-reliefs, mosaics, urns, and remains of pillars, have been dispersed, — some of them sold by the peasants for trifling sums, some disposed of by commissioners privately, some secretly abstracted. The English also plundered a great deal during their three-years' possession of the island, and only the smallest portion has been saved for the museum at Naples. It seems as if no place in the world had been so unfortunate in regard to its antiquities as Naples.

The excavations at Pompeii first directed the attention of archæologists to Capri. The first person

who searched the island with this object, so far as I know, was Luigi Geraldini of Ferrara, in the year 1777. He was followed by Hadrawa, and in the beginning of this century by Romanelli, then by Guiseppe Maria Secondo and the Count della Torre Rezzonico, all of whom published writings upon Capri. In 1830 Feola took charge of the excavations, and lived a long time upon the island. The ruins also were explored; and in many places were found quite well preserved rooms, and works of art of the best Roman period. But, as the inhabitants of Capri needed space, the excavations were filled in, all traces of them destroyed, and gardens laid out over the antiquities. Much, probably, remains concealed from the light of day. Pieces of marble, and coins of the Roman Empire, are often picked up. A good deal of marble is to be seen in the pavement of the streets of Capri, and in Anacapri on the Plain of Damecuta. Here and there may also be found a slab of marble, with a half-effaced inscription, which has served as the sill of a house-door. And there are a large number of foundations of old houses; and, wherever you wander, some remnant of antiquity breaks in upon your dreams and meditations.

Not far from San Costanzo stood one of the old villas of Tiberius, upon a hill close by the sea, and

with a wide outlook. It is now called Palazzo à Mare. Excavations were made here in 1790 by Hadrawa, who found the greater part of the villa almost destroyed ; but there were still some interesting remains, among them two beautiful pillars of Cipollino ; two of Porta Santa ; a remarkably fine Corinthian capital now in the Museum of Naples ; two superb marble floors, of which one was obtained by an Englishman, one by the Countess Woronzow ; and a beautiful altar of Cybele, which Sir William Hamilton succeeded in procuring for the British Museum. At present this palace is the picture of most utter desolation. Great masses of the walls have fallen into the sea ; others strew the slope down to the coast ; but a row of chambers may still be recognized, and a wall built in a semicircle, perhaps the temple of the divinity to whom the villa was consecrated. A broken pillar of red Oriental granite rises out of the rubbish.

Yet more scanty are the remains of that villa which once crowned the beautiful hill of Castello, close by the town, on the southern shore. On the side toward the sea it shows itself as a steep wall of rock, divided in the middle by a grotto ; on the land-side it is surrounded by vineyards ; but on top it bears the best preserved fortification of Capri, — a little fort, with battlemented walls and

towers, which gives a touch of the mediæval element to the character of the island. Hadrawa made excavations here in 1786, and uncovered chambers and baths in great number but much injured, and found pavements, pillars, a beautiful vase of white marble which represents Tiberius offering sacrifice, a gem representing Germanicus, and other figures in marble and in stucco. These objects, also, were sold for a very low price to Hamilton, to the painter Tischbein, to Prince Schwarzenberg, and to unknown Russians and Englishmen. In the year 1791 the excavations were filled up. But what are all the treasures of antiquity compared with this view from the hill Castello, over the perfect Sicilian Sea, the ever blue Bay of Naples, and the majestic outline of the rocks of Anacapri! You overlook from here the steepest declivity of the southern shore, and those three abruptly-rising cliffs, the rocky obelisks of Capri, which are called the Faraglioni.

At the foot of the hill is one of the most enchanting spots on the island, — the Piccola Marina, a diminutive beach upon the southern coast, surrounded by scattered rocks, whose black masses strew the shore, and form a small peninsula in the sea, covered with water. Two fishermen's dwellings are hidden away here like cells, built into the rock

which gives needful shelter to a few boats. The beach is a fantastic freak of nature, and is the only one on the whole southern coast of Capri. Sitting here, you are entirely lost from the sight of the world. The Bay of Naples, with its islands and shores and sails, completely disappears, as if it had never been heard of; and before the eye the shoreless ocean stretches far into the distance, toward Sikelia and Africa. There you sit, and gaze out over the boundless sea, and launch, one after the other, the ships of fancy for Palermo, Cagliari, and Carthage. All about you the desolate wastes of rock have a wild and gloomy aspect; on each side of you are deep caves piercing far into the island; on the right is Cape Marcellino, a colossal brown mass of rock stretching out into the sea; on the left, Cape Tragara, with peaks and battlements, like a castle in a fairy-tale; and, close by, the strange, cone-like peaks of the Faraglioni,—inaccessible cliffs, over a hundred feet high, which rise out of the waves like pyramids from the Lake of Mœris. All three are conical in shape, one of them smooth, as if polished by human agency, the others most fantastically cut and carved. Their shadows cast a melancholy gloom upon the water; but in the middle of one of these rocks is an opening, forming a perfect natural arch, and piercing the rock entirely through,

so that it gives passage for a boat. Upon the highest points, dwarf trees and wild grasses wave in the sea-wind ; and there sits the mew, uttering its hoarse cry, or flutters about, teaching its young brood to fly. ~~✕~~

If you sit here, you are reminded of that passage in the "Prometheus Bound" of Æschylus, where Prometheus, chained to the rock, suddenly hears the fluttering wings of the Oceanides, and the sound of their choral song. I have often listened to the sea-birds from these cliffs in the sacred hush of dawn, when the sea begins to glimmer, and they throw themselves from the rocks, and fly over the waves, beating the air with their wings in long strokes ; or in the evening, when all is still, and they sit lonely on the peaks of the Faraglioni, and utter their sad, harp-like tones, which produce in you a strange, weird sensation. For the song of the sea-bird, tuneless as the rush of the waves, and like the quivering notes of the Æolian harp, awakens in you inexplicable longings and desires for what is far away. There were on the Faraglioni, as I well knew, sea-mews, on a visit from the Island of Ustica and from the Grotto Alghero in Sardinia. If I had only been twenty years younger, I would have asked of them the favor of carrying me over the sea to that same wonderful grotto ; or to the

beautiful orange-grove of Milis in Sardinia, where grow five hundred thousand orange-trees, and the nightingales sing day and night to the blossoms and the fruits. I would have asked them to place me under the largest orange-tree in Europe, which is as large as an oak, and underneath which the Marquis Bayl invites his guests to partake of nectar and ambrosia.

See, there is a ship of fancy which has been launched and sailed away !

But who is there who can lie on this little beach, and not indulge in these visions? The wildness of this shore-scenery and its desolate character give it an irresistible fascination, especially by moonlight, or when the sea is disturbed, and the caves disappear from sight under the whispering waves ; or in the stillness of night, when lights sparkle around the reefs and the dark cape, — the torches of the fishermen, which now disappear beneath the waves, like stars or meteors ; then shine out again, here one, and there another ; then a third and fourth, and now another still, and there again by the cape, one after another.

Only a few fishermen keep their boats here. They may be seen sitting upon the white pebbles of the shore, mending their nets ; and, in the midst of this desolate rocky wilderness, their silent lonely

occupation has something poetical about it. There is a mystery about them, as if they could tell, if they chose, of the wonders of the deep, and of the sirens that dwell therein. A steep cliff above the little beach is called the Rock of the Sirens : the fancy of the people always selects the most suitable name for each locality. And there is no spot in Capri which recalls the sirens more than this.

Here you can lie for hours on the rocks, almost intoxicated by the scent of the sea, watching the gold-green water that stirs and ripples underneath, glimmers and rustles, like pinions in the silent air. The midsummer song of the cicada rings continually ; the notes seem to tremble on the air, like floating bits of sunshine, and like the quivering of the heat upon the rocks. Light, air, and perfume pervade all the senses : the mind is satiated with loneliness.

Between the Faraglioni and the small beach, rises, above the blocks of limestone, the arch of one of the most spacious grottoes on this coast, so rich everywhere in these formations. It is called "The Grotto of the Arsenal." It is not covered by water, but is a cavern in the earth : upon its walls may still be seen vestiges of Roman masonry, and traces of rooms are also visible. The name of the cave shows clearly that it was

formerly a storehouse, perhaps also a dockyard for the galleys of Tiberius, for it is high enough for this purpose ; and at its entrance may be seen numerous marks, as if the stone had been worn away by iron. This place is usually called L'Unghia Marina. Many remains of old walls are visible here upon the rocky shore, as well as on the hills above. Ancient walls are also to be seen on Cape Tragara, around which stand the Faraglioni in the water, and the cliff Monacone (Great Monk). There must certainly have been a small harbor here in the time of Tiberius. Perhaps a covered way led from the Villa of Mount Tuoro, situated above, directly to the shore, where galleys lay ready equipped for flight in case of need ; for, even upon this island fortress, the tyrant trembled, in constant fear, and had taken every precaution to be able to escape by sea at any time.

Let us disembark at Cape Tragara, and climb the hill Tuoro Grande. It is as beautiful here as on any peak in Capri. Above the old walls runs a telegraph-wire. It is quite remarkable, that on almost every mountain-peak of this island of hermits is the cell either of a recluse or of a telegraph-operator. The operator of Tuoro Grande sits in a small white house. His room has two little windows ; in one is placed a telescope, in the other

— another telescope. The telegrapher himself — a very short, ancient-looking man, whose eyes have contracted a habit of blinking from much spying through the telescope — sits at a table between the two windows, before a large book of records : every moment he jumps up, and looks through the glass at the window on the left ; then runs to the other window, on the right, and looks through the other glass ; then he sits down with philosophic calm to his register, remains seated for a time ; then runs again to the windows and the telescopes. And so it goes on from morning to evening. But his dog sits erect before the door, and also gazes over the sea, though without the aid of a telescope. And it is arranged as follows : High up on Anacapri sits the telegraph-operator, in his house on the summit of Solaro, and looks out over the Sicilian Sea to see whether any sailing-vessels pass by, and, if so, of what kind. If he sees any thing remarkable, he sends a message to the operator on Mount Tuoro ; this latter despatches it at once across the Straits of Capri, to the operator of Massa, who sits upon the promontory of Minerva, a sleepless watcher of the sea ; he speeds the airy tidings with winged haste to Castellamare, to the watcher there, learned in signs, interpreter of the airy post ; this latter hastens the message

on its way to the Castle St. Elmo, above Naples ; the watcher of St. Elmo forwards the news to the royal Atreus-Castle at Neapolis. So the man upon Mount Solaro is the author of these air-wandering messages. When this had all been clearly expounded to me by the telegrapher, I was reminded of the beginning of the "Agamemnon" of Æschylus, where the watchman upon the Castle of Atreus looks for the fiery signals which are to give the news of the taking of Troy, —

“ Θεοὺς μὲν αἰτῶ τῶνδ’ ἀπαλλαγῆναι πόνων,”

“ I pray the gods for deliverance from these toils,” —

and also those words of Clytemnestra, which describe in a most wonderfully picturesque manner the wandering fire-post. It descends from Mount Ida, hastens to the Hermian rocks of Lemnos, whence the message of flame is sent on to Athos, the mountain of Zeus ; this, in turn, sends the golden-bright ray, like a sun, to the beacon of Makistos, then hastens the flash of fire over the waves of Euripos, rouses the watchers of Mesapios, flies onward over the plain of Asopos, falls like a ray of moonlight on the rocks of Cithæron, sends its light over Lake Gorgopis, reaches at last the summit of Ægiplanctus, then flies over the Saronian Sea to the Arachnæn height, and arrives finally at the city of the Atreidæ.

If the Greeks had laid a submarine electric cable from Troy, we should have lost from Æschylus this beautiful passage, which is certainly one of the most picturesque descriptions ever given by a poet.

Evening had now come. The chief operator of Solaro suddenly gave a signal, which he of Tuoro sent on to Massa. I asked the far-gazing man what news he had communicated. "To-day nothing new," he said contentedly, and blinked with his eyes, gave a signal to his dog, and stumbled down the mountain. He lives high up on Anacapri, and must every evening climb the five hundred and sixty steps of the rocky staircase. In the morning he again descends five hundred and sixty steps ; and, as he has pursued his lonely occupation for the last ten years, it may be computed with mathematical accuracy, that this extraordinary man has, over and over again, climbed the height of Chimborazo. He receives only about seventy-five cents a day.

With the exception of this watchman out of Æschylus, I found no antiquities upon Mount Tuoro. Nevertheless a Villa of Tiberius stood here also. Now, between Mount Tuoro and Mount Castello lies the valley of Tragara, which is green with vines and olive-trees ; upon the edge of it stands the most

beautiful mediæval building of the island, — La Certosa, a now deserted convent of monks of the order of St. Bruno. This convent occupies a great deal of space ; the unique style of its architecture, its arcades, bell-towers adorned with scroll-work, its terraces, and row of domed roofs rising from the green foliage, stand forth so grotesquely upon the background of blue sea, that it is one of the most interesting sights which the island affords. The church with its slender nave, without tower or steeple, is the only building of Capri which possesses a Gothic roof covered with red tiles : its straight lines are in sharp contrast with the rounded outlines of the tiny domed houses used by the monks as cells, and with the circular form of the courtyard. The inner part is of simple construction, and there is a good deal of fresco-painting on the walls. If you step through the entrance, the large space surrounded by arcades, and forming a cloister, has a very pleasing effect. The cells, the little courts, the gardens run to waste and covered with the most luxuriant growth of weeds, make of this deserted cloister a romantic labyrinth. La Certosa is consecrated to St. James. It was founded in the year 1363 by Giacomo Arcucci, a noble inhabitant of Capri. His wife had remained long childless, like Sarah ; and he had taken a vow to

build a convent, if Heaven should grant him a son. Heaven speedily took the man at his word, and granted his wish : so he built this convent, after the plan of that magnificent La Certosa of San Martino on the hill Vomero, above Naples. In the year 1374, the building being finished, monks from San Martino went thither. With time, La Certosa became rich, and the best land in Capri belonged to the monks. But the Parthenopeian Republic closed this convent, and two others in Capri dedicated to St. Theresa ; and their property was confiscated. At present this property has been granted to the Cathedral of Ischia : so the poor people of Capri suffer the great injustice that their best landed property is taken from them to support the lazy priesthood of another island. While the English held possession of Capri, this convent was the headquarters of Sir Hudson Lowe, and, when under the control of the French, was used for military purposes : it is now about to be transformed into a soldier's hospital.

In the valley of Tragara, remains of antique walls may be seen, and this is supposed by archæologists to be the site of the old gymnasium, and of the Villa Julia, which Augustus is said to have built in honor of his much-loved daughter ; but these are all uncertain conjectures. Yes, there is not one of

these great ruins which run out in a curved line far beyond Tragara, toward Tuoro Grande, that allow of certain recognition. They are called Camerelle, like similar remains in the Villa of Hadrian at Tivoli. They are built very strongly and securely, partly of bricks, and partly of the limestone of Capri, and show remains of wings running out, and containing rows of chambers, whose arches may still be recognized. I think the opinion of Rosario Mangone may be sustained, which is, that these Camerelle formed a street which led to the Villa of Tiberius. They were divided into three parts: one must have led up to Monte Tuoro, one to the Villa San Michele, and the third to the Villa of Zeus.

Above the Camerelle rises the beautifully formed hill of San Michele, one of the most enchanting heights on the island, from the summit of which may be enjoyed the finest view of the city lying below. Above it rises Fort Castello, and high above this the sharp peaks of Solaro; on both sides green valleys, and the hyacinth-colored sea. That upon the summit of San Michele stood one of the most magnificent palaces of Tiberius, the exquisite situation renders indisputable. At the foot of the mountain are still to be seen mighty ruins, rows of vaulted chambers, doubtless the sub-

structure of the gently-rising street. Above, on the plateau, are gardens and vintages, whose floors give forth a hollow sound, showing that under these, also, are vaulted chambers. There are also to be seen Roman walls in reticulated work, and several old rooms. One of these shows signs of being the chapel dedicated to St. Michael, from which the mountain receives its name. To-day a little church dedicated to this saint stands quite alone on the mountain, and attracts notice from the unique character of its Moorish architecture. Surrounded by a wall, and forsaken, among broken remnants of scattered stone, it recalls the ruins of Mecca.

There have been some researches at San Michele, although the excavations are not here very diligently carried on. The peasants have terraced the whole of the side of the mountain toward the land, and planted it with olive-trees. The houses of the town are built so close to the rocks, that from the mountain you can step down upon the roofs. One evening I took my way homeward from the mountain, looking for a path, and at last climbed down upon a roof, and from the roof, through the rooms of the house, into the street.

The eastern coast of the island rises to the height of nine hundred and seventy feet, and plunges perpendicularly into the sea : upon this highest point

is the Villa of Zeus. Here the whole shore assumes a character of most striking and impressive wildness. If you go from Tuoro Grande, through the little valley of Matromania, toward the south-west side of the island, you come to a place where the coast contracts suddenly, forming a very acute angle. Here is a fantastic forest of jagged rocks, which strew the shore in wild confusion. In the midst is a rock which divides into a perfect natural arch. Next to the Blue Grotto, this is the most striking natural phenomenon of the island. Deep below is the sea in black shadow; high above, the beautiful sky; around, the red-brown cliffs; across the sea, the Cape of Minerva and the high coast of Amalfi and Salerno, like some creation of magic.

We now descend by a steep path to a deep, beautiful, and dreamy grotto upon the shore, — the mysterious Grotto of Matromania. The entrance is through a semicircular archway of great breadth, for the cave is about fifty-five feet in breadth and a hundred feet in depth. The work of nature, it is nevertheless modified by the hand of man. At the entrance are to be seen remnants of Roman wall, and within, traces of Roman masonry still cling to the rock. In the lowest part rise one above the other, in semicircles, two rows of stone-work, like

tiers of seats ; in the middle are steps, leading apparently to the niche of the god whose image was placed here. All bears witness that the interior of a temple lies before you. The name Matromania, which the grotto bears, and which the people have with unconscious irony transformed into Matrimonio, as if Tiberius had here held wedding-ceremonies, may be derived from Magnæ Matris Antrum, or perhaps from Magnum Mithræ Antrum.

It is said that the temple was dedicated to Mithras ; not so much because the Persian sun-god was supposed to be worshipped in caves, as because in this grotto was found one of those bas-reliefs which represent the mysterious sacrifices to Mithras, and of which a great number are in the Vatican Museum. I saw two of these in studios at Naples : one had been found in the Grotto of Pausilippo, the other in Matromania ; they represent Mithras, in Persian garments, kneeling upon a bull, into whose throat he plunges the sacrificial knife, while serpents, scorpions, and dogs attack and wound the animal. There seems nothing contrary to probability in finding a temple to Mithras in this grotto. It is well adapted for the mystical rites of sun-worship, for it looks toward the east ; and whoever, from its depths, beholds the sun-god rise above the distant hills, and sees his purple light upon the near

and distant mountains and the waves, may well become a sun-worshipper.

The wild and romantic situation of the grotto, the ruins of the old temple, the mysterious representation of the worship of Mithras, the holy silence, the twilight dimness, the sound of trickling drops of water, finally the wide, impressive prospect stretching far over sea and land, unite to thrill the heart with a sensation of awe ; and even he who has never heard of the worship of Mithras, nor the traditions of Tiberius, feels himself here in the presence of a mystery.

In this cave of mystery was found a mysterious treasure, — a marble tablet with a Greek inscription which runs thus : —

“Ye kind demons who dwell in the Stygian land,
Receive me also, me unhappy, into Hades ;
For not by the command of Mo'ra, by the power of the
ruler,
Was I suddenly struck with death, which, innocent, I did
not fear.
The emperor was still loading me with gifts ;
But he has now refused hope to me and to my parents.
I have not attained twenty years ; no, not fifteen.
Alas ! and I see no more the light of the shining day ;
Hypatos is my name : I call to thee, my brother ;
My parents, I mourn unto you. Oh, weep no longer, ye
poor ones ! ”

Of what dreadful deed do these mysterious words tell through the epitaph of a boy? Herein is hinted a romance of Capri. The fate of the poor Hypatos is hidden from the world, and yet I know it. Under the influence of his demon, Tiberius sacrificed his favorite to the sun, here in this cave, here before this altar. So Hadrian later sacrificed the beautiful Antinous to the Nile. For these were the days of human sacrifice: though not made in large numbers, they were still customary, and were usually performed in honor of Mithras.

Yes, if this cave could open its mouth, and these stern cliffs begin to speak, they would relate grim stories of those ancient times. Tradition has situated upon this wild shore the customary dwelling of Tiberius, and laid here the scene of his fearful pleasures. It is the fiend-haunted place of the island. If you climb higher up on the southern shore, you come to a spot which is called Salto di Tiberio, the Leap of Tiberius. The shore here rises eight hundred feet perpendicularly out of the sea. From this point, so says tradition, the emperor was accustomed to throw his victims into the sea, and there is no doubt that it was the same place shown as a curiosity in the time of Suetonius; for what is so frightful is never easily blotted from the human mind. Suetonius says, "In Capri is shown

the place of his murders ; where, in his own presence, he caused those whom he had sentenced to death to be thrown into the sea, after protracted and exquisite tortures. A number of sailors were stationed below to receive the bodies, and beat them with oars and sailyards, until life became extinct." There is a kind of horrible pleasure in rolling stones down this steep declivity, which hasten in frightful leaps from point to point, and make the rocks resound with the thunder of their fall.

A few steps from this dreadful "Leap," there now stands a little house. Over the door is written the word, "Restaurant." In the room within stands, at every hour of the day, a table covered with fruit, bread, and flasks filled with the Tears of Tiberius. The innkeeper who has established this place of entertainment has also enclosed with a little wall the small beach at the foot of the Salto, and now offers to visitors this fearful sight, as it were, upon a salver.

This house is on the way to the old lighthouse of Capri, distant hardly thirty steps from the Salto. It has now fallen to ruin, with the exception of the massive quadrangular substructure of calcined stone. A few years since, the upper part was struck by lightning, and thrown down. All around lie pieces of the walls, covering the ground to quite

a distance, and scattered among the grape-vines. These and the ruins that still remain, which also show traces of a roof supported by arches, prove that the lighthouse was once a magnificent structure. It rivalled the lighthouse of Alexandria, and the towers of Ravenna and Puteoli. The poet Statius calls it "The rival of the night-piercing moon." According to Suetonius, this lighthouse was thrown down by an earthquake a few days before the murder of Tiberius; but it must have been rebuilt, otherwise Statius would not have mentioned it. Its height to-day is scarcely sixty feet. In the year 1804 Hadrawa undertook excavations near the lighthouse. He found there traces of a subterranean staircase, a quantity of specimens of marble, and that bas-relief which represents the mourning figures of Lucilla and Crispina.

Climbing a few steps higher, we now arrive at the renowned Villa of Zeus. According to Suetonius, this was the customary dwelling of Tiberius; and he expressly says that the tyrant kept himself shut up there for nine months after the execution of Sejanus, from fear of a conspiracy. There is no doubt that the ruins on the highest north-east shore of the island, the Capo, belong to this villa. This fact rests not only on the authority of tradition, but

is also inferred from the size of the palace, these ruins being the most extensive on Capri ; also from the commanding situation, and especially from their being among the finest remains which have been preserved from the time of ancient Rome. Here you may wander in a labyrinth of arched passages and subterranean galleries, countless chambers now used for vintages or cow-stalls. Capitals, pediments, architraves, marble steps, lie around in fragments. A few isolated rooms have still the remains of stucco-work, and decorations in the deep yellow or dark red of Pompeii may still be recognized. Some of the floors still retain their mosaic of white bits of marble with black borders, and here and there staircases to the rooms below are well preserved.

The villa appears to have been built in several stories, the lowest of all still covered with earth not yet excavated. The upper part surprises the beholder by the yet well-preserved plan of its rooms, which, on the side toward the water, form a semicircle, perhaps around a theatre. Niches and circular walls, however, suggest a temple. This villa unites every thing that belongs to the transcendent magnificence of royal life ; and since it was so long the seat of the emperor, before any buildings by Nero or Hadrian existed, must have

surpassed in splendor all the other villas of Rome. Add to this the incomparable situation, above the straits, where the two bays lie spread out before the eye. Here sat Tiberius, like an eagle in his eyry, beholding every thing that passed upon the island, and also the ships that entered the bay, coming from Greece, Asia, Africa, or Rome. The view from the water, sailing between Capri and the Cape of Minerva, must also have been superb, — here the marble palaces and the lighthouse, there the beautiful temples; for Tiberius looked out upon that promontory which is to-day crowned by a tower, and beheld both the far-renowned Temples of Minerva and of the Sirens, and the Temple of Heracles.

I sat for many hours among these ruins, and in my imagination restored the Capri of the ancients. What a vision! — to behold all these heights adorned with marble palaces, and the beautiful island covered with temples, arcades, statues, theatres, pleasure-groves, and promenades. And what a picture it would be, might the forms of the Romans themselves become visible, walking in the streets! — the court of an emperor, senators, ambassadors from every part of the world, the beautiful women of Ionia and Asia, a wild swarm of bacchantes, nymphs, and gods, a whole heathen mythology of

fantastic figures ; for here lived Bacchus, and his court was one of bacchantes and satyrs.

If you are familiar with the subject of a portrait, the painting itself assumes an air of reality. Very fine busts and colossal statues of Tiberius may be seen in Naples ; but the best are to be found in the Vatican Museum. I have remarked that the portrait-busts of Tiberius that are in Rome represent him in earlier life ; those of Naples, in his later years, apparently because most of the busts of the emperor which were dug up in Herculaneum and Pompeii belong to the period of his residence upon Capri. There is in the Vatican, in the Museo Chiaramonti, a colossal figure of Tiberius, which was found in Veii. It represents him as a youthful hero of ideal beauty, with features which seem to have been carefully copied from life ; the head nobly formed and very spirited, the mouth exceedingly delicate and beautiful. The features resemble those of the youthful Bacchus ; and there is a luxuriant roundness of the body and limbs which give to it almost a feminine character. This moral monster was in his day, like Casar Borgia, the handsomest man on earth. Of all the emperors of Rome, Augustus is the only one who surpasses him in classic beauty. Once seen, the head of Tiberius can never be forgotten. You expect to behold the

distorted face of a demon, and are amazed at the delicacy and feminine character of the features, which might belong to a Sardanapalus. In old age, however, there seems to have come a fine, sharp line of scorn and scepticism drawn about the mouth ; and the expression acquires something of wilfulness, hard secretiveness, even of vulgarity. This is seen in the colossal head at Naples, and the busts in the Capitol. But, for the sight of animal wickedness embodied in marble, we must go to the fiend-like head of Caracalla, the most perfect expression of diabolical wickedness that the hand of the sculptor has ever portrayed.

I think that this terrible man was only a frightful judgment, which the history of the world has confirmed. He was the first monarch, with the exception of Augustus, who governed in the form of a republic. He received as an inheritance a depraved humanity. Himself appointed to evil, he came into an evil world, and, like Satan and his angels, was destroyed with it. Caligula had the insane desire of becoming ruler of the whole earth, and lived only a few years. That is not to be wondered at ; for chance, in one day, cast at the feet of these men the earth, with all its pleasures. Therefore they became insane : they wished to swallow the whole world at a mouthful,

like an egg. After the period of civil wars, and the Augustan age, an awful silence came over the world, the most dreary pause in the history of mankind, while the Old World irretrievably decayed. Augustus was great and fortunate, because he conquered his power; his successors were wretched, because they had no object for which to strive. Placed suddenly in possession of the long-desired imperial power, they knew not what to do with their days; for pleasure becomes unbearable when it is not varied by privation, and seasoned with fatigue. Caligula, in his madness, wished to build a bridge over the sea. Nero set fire to Rome, and played on his lute while it was burning; he wrote verses, and wished to be distinguished as a charioteer and a comedian. In every period of decay, we find, in succession, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, Nero, — demons and madmen, — for the revolving wheel of history is always turning. Nature would be too diabolical did she create such monsters, one after another, without reason, and according to an idle chance.

But it would be doing injustice to Tiberius to confound him with his successors. These were simply coarse villains, who, throwing away every disguise, exposed openly their bestial nature. Tiberius, superior in mind to his contemporaries,

was a man of clear head, a finished diplomatist, of the school of the hypocrite Augustus ; so subtle, so veiled is his face, with a silent, watchful expression, as if lying in wait for an adversary, and with a crafty, Jesuitical look about the mouth : seldom has Nature formed a more perfect diplomatist's mouth. These firmly-closed lips bring to mind the *mot* of Talleyrand, that the object of speech is to conceal the thought. But we know from Tacitus what was the skill of Tiberius in the art of speech. Tiberius invented the grammar and logic of diplomacy. This man did not promise, did not swear, did not lie, but was himself an incarnate falsehood. How clumsy, beside this subtle, classic despot, appear the rulers of later times ! — adventurers who boldly take possession of thrones by means of falsehood, and kings who rudely break their oaths. Tiberius would have dismissed them to his freedmen, with a contemptuous smile. This man never allowed any one to suspect his intentions, for then he would have encountered opposition. He never met circumstances face to face, nor struck a straightforward blow ; he surrounded his adversaries ; his will and his intention were always doubtful, seen in a kind of dim twilight. Read, in witness thereof, the masterly account of the fall of Sejanus.

The man of Elba has warmly defended the character of Tiberius, and has thus taken him under his protection in opposition to the judgment of Tacitus and that of history.

After Tiberius had refined the diplomacy of Augustus to a system of Jesuitism, his work was completed, and he retired to this villa, to drown in pleasure the weariness of life. He sank into idle voluptuousness. Fear, which he had himself established as a ruling power in government, would not allow him to die. He exhausted every variety of pleasure ; but human nature is so constituted, that it can enjoy pleasure only for a short time. This is the lesson we learn from this rocky Capri and this Villa of Zeus, to which the ruler of the world exiled himself, having learned to look upon this sojourn only as a banishment. Think what scenes the walls of these chambers have witnessed ! what brutal orgies of unrestrained violence ! Within these very walls, which once echoed to the sweet notes of the Lydian flute and the soft laughter of beautiful women, now pasture the cattle of poor peasants, and the halls of Tiberius are to-day the portion of the ivy and wild fig-tree. Mallows, roses, and pomegranates grow in tangled masses in these ruined chambers ; grape-vines, the descendants of the ancient Bac-

chus of Capri, flutter and dance in the wind, as if they were the spirits of those beautiful women who formerly danced here before Tiberius.

A little way above stands a chapel to Santa Maria del Soccorso: it is on the highest point of the Villa, and built directly upon the ruins. Here dwells a hermit. There is no place in the world so adapted for self mortification as the ruins of this Villa of Tiberius, under whose reign, and during whose life upon Capri, Christ was slain upon the cross. The chapel stands here, like Christianity itself, upon the ruins of the heathen world, whose sins it expiated. This is a strange combination, and there is a strong temptation to linger, wrapped in thought, in a place so full of suggestions; for here rise before our imagination two figures, contemporaries, representing each a different period of the world,—here in the West, the hoary demon, Tiberius, the ruler of the earth, representative of the decaying world of heathendom, and the type of its moral ruin; in the East, the youthful ideal image of Jesus nailed to the cross, but surrounded by the inspired prophets of a new dawn of life. These two figures stand opposed to each other, like Ahriman and Ormuzd, the gods of Light and of Darkness.

How you also recall here the image of John of

Patmos, intoxicated with light, with the eagle of Zeus ; still used as one of the heathen emblems.

Sunk in these observations and reflections upon the early youth of Christianity, I was standing among these ruins, when, behold, I suddenly became aware of an apparition, in strong contrast with the character of that pure, spiritual religion, in the shape of a dirty Franciscan hermit, so that I almost started back on beholding the man, — an old monk, with a long white beard, a black cowl, and a club-foot, limping, ugly, with greedy eyes. It was as if I saw Tiberius before me in the character of Mephistopheles, and heard him say with a satirical laugh, “Redivivus ! only changed a little. This is the history of Christendom.”

The club-foot limped before me into his cell. I looked over his books, and read on one of them this title, “Legends of the Holy Virgins, who died for Our Lord Jesus Christ.” He showed me the copy of a bas-relief which is to be found in the museum at Naples : it represents the undraped figure of an old man upon a horse ; before him sits a young girl with a torch ; a naked youth leads the horse toward the statue of a god. The resemblance of the rider to Tiberius is so striking, that you might suppose this bas-relief to represent a scene out of his life at Capri, perhaps a sacrifice

to Priapus ; but the chain around the neck of the figure is exactly the same as that worn by the dying gladiator and other Gauls, so that it cannot be intended to represent the Emperor Tiberius. The hermit had copied this bas-relief in water-color with wonderful diligence and with evident pleasure. It is the especial property of this place, for it was dug up under the ruins of this villa. Twice these ruins have been explored, but each time incompletely, — in the year 1804 by Hadrawa, and in 1827 by Feola. Beautiful pavements of marble were found, one of which is preserved before the altar in the principal church of Capri ; many pillars of great value, — one small one of lapis lazuli, which was bought at auction by an Englishman ; statues, which have been all scattered or lost ; and mosaics, which are preserved in the museum at Naples.

There is not an emperor in the world who can boast of a dwelling with a more superb view than the cell of this hermit. His windows overlook the bays of Naples and of Salerno, and the beautiful Italian shores and islands. There is nothing that can be compared with the view of the whole near promontory of Minerva : it is like the most exquisite carving ; behind it may be seen the beautiful mountain-range of Sant' Angelo, and the whole

shore of Amalfi and Salerno beyond, foreshortened, like the scenery of an immense theatre, as far as Pæstum, curve after curve, in a magnificent sweep. Through the clear air I could see Pæstum far over the sea, then Castele Baro and Punta Licosa, across miles of distance. At sunset the play of rainbow colors upon the mountains is of enchanting beauty ; and it seemed often as if the prospect before me could not be reality, but the radiant creation of a dream.

One evening I sat among the ruins of the villa, feasting my gaze upon the far-reaching view of this promontory, when my glance fell upon the silver-white skin of a serpent, which had been recently stripped off, and lay at my feet. I received it as a supernatural gift, — a link uniting me in strange ominous fashion with those bygone days. I remembered that Tiberius owned a favorite serpent which he fed, and with which he amused himself. I descended the mountain with my prize ; then came after me Mephistopheles, riding upon an ass. I showed the serpent-skin to the monk, and learned from this incident that this mysterious man was an accomplished serpent-charmer. He told me that he could capture serpents alive, at any time and place that he chose. I asked him how he managed this. "After ordering them to lie still," he

said, "I grasp them; then they wind about my arm. I enclose them in a jar, and send them to Naples, to the apothecary."—"But how can you order them to lie still?" He answered, with a satanic smile, "I say a word or two in their ear, and mention the name of St. Paul, and they at once lie perfectly still."—"Can you not tell me the charm," I asked, "so that I, also, may have power over serpents?"—"No," said he. "I received it from an old hermit, and promised, with a solemn oath, never to impart it." When I asked what the name of St. Paul had to do with the charm, he replied that Paul was the patron saint of serpents, and that every animal had its patron saint. When the monk told me that, I asked what were the patron saints of all the animals that creep and coil. St. Gertrude is the patroness of lizards: this caused me to give her a high place in my esteem; for I am very fond of lizards, there is something so graceful, so maidenly, about them, and they lisp so charmingly with their little tongues. St. Anthony is the patron of fishes, St. Agatha of lions, St. Agnes of lambs.

So I was right in my conjecture that this hermit practised the black art; and I am disposed to believe that he follows other unholy pursuits in the moonlight, among the ruins or on the cliffs, seeking herbs, roots, and poisonous snakes.

All this time we have forgotten that there is upon the island another little town, — Anacapri. This is no wonder ; for one may live below, upon Capri, seeing and hearing nothing of Anacapri, nature has so entirely cut off all communication between the towns. You see of it only the steep, rocky steps which lead up thither, and they have small attraction, since the fatigue of mounting them is great ; and it is a noticeable fact, of which you will not easily find another example, that here upon one small island are two towns — distant hardly a quarter of an hour's walk, if they had been upon level ground — so entirely separated from each other, that the inhabitants rarely meet, seldom take part in each other's festivals, and even speak a different dialect.

Tradition relates, that the foundation of Anacapri was due to Love. In former days a youthful pair fled from the lower city, climbed the steep rocks to the upper part of the island, and there built themselves an asylum in the bushes, high up at the foot of Solaro ; since then, they have been followed by other lovers. And so, in due time, arose, under the protection of the god of Love, this colony which is called Anacapri.

And still, at this very day, winged Love flies, like a mountain eagle, back and forth from Capri to

Anacapri, and lends his wings to any youth who loves one of those wild and beautiful maidens who sit high up, in their little houses, at their looms, and sing songs of love and enchantment, like Circe in the Odyssey.

Thus is Anacapri separated from the lower part of the island ; so that the only approach to it is by the steep Jacob's Ladder of five hundred and sixty steps. For the rocks rise suddenly from Lower Capri, steep and perpendicular as walls, and take the wildest shapes, forming a sort of gigantic natural wall, over which, like the roof of a basilica, rises Mount Solaro, and bears upon its slopes the town of Anacapri and its secluded cloistered inhabitants, like a race of hermits. The steps, cut in the solid rock, take a zigzag course upward, and end above upon the platform. This wonderful work is ascribed to remote antiquity, when the Phœnicians or the Greeks founded the upper city ; for it is only in this spot that any communication with the lower city is possible. Traces of the oldest steps may be seen. Half way up the staircase stands the odd little Chapel of St. Antony, where the traveller may stop to take breath ; for he cannot mount to this height without becoming exhausted. But the incomparable view from the platform called Capo di Monte amply rewards him for his trouble ; for

here is visible the enormous rock, with its broad front and waving trees, like the hanging-gardens of Semiramis, rising high into the air above, and plunging into the dizzy depths below ; and beneath it the picturesque view of Lower Capri and of both seas. Higher yet above this platform rises Solaro, some hundreds of feet, covered with desolate gray rock, and bears upon its steep declivity the beautiful ruins of Castel Barbarossa, which received its name from the distinguished corsair who once laid Capri desolate.

If you go a few steps farther upon the platform, a new and foreign world opens before the eye. Lower Capri has altogether disappeared, and you enter a retreat of the most enchanting and bewildering beauty. Mount Solaro, almost the exact counterpart of Monte Pellegrino of Palermo, rises in a high peak before you : it is bare, waste, and brown, and strewn with countless boulders of rock. Toward the west and north, it slopes down toward the largest plain that the island possesses ; and upon this steep slope lies Anacapri, high above the sea, among green trees and flowering shrubs. 'This little town also appears to consist of hermits' cells ; for the small houses, built in the most unique style, stand separated from each other in the midst of gardens. And here is a greater growth of trees than

in Capri, olive-trees, especially, and many grape-vines, which, in the Campanian fashion, twine around the trunks of the trees, clinging with their tendrils. The air is pure and invigorating ; but the sun is even more powerful on this sloping plain than elsewhere on the island. At the sight of this picturesque and indescribable little town,—the strange wastes of rock above it, burned by the sun, the calm and stillness of the blue, boundless ocean, stretching far away into the distance,—there comes over you a strong desire to bid the world farewell, and, planting in the earth the pilgrim staff, build here a hermit's cell.

The silence is yet deeper here than in Capri. Not a man is visible, only women, singing at their work, sitting before the door, at their loom or wheel, twisting the yellow silk upon the spindle, or digging in the garden, or gathering the mulberry-leaves for the silkworms, or coming and going with a pitcher of water on their heads ; for the men are all away. Since in summer so many young men go for coral to Africa or to Corsica, only women are to be seen in the city ; and it is as if you were among the women of Lemnos, who sit manless upon their rocks, weaving forever their endless webs.

On the days and hours when the boats are expected from Naples, I often found a number of

young girls sitting on the steps, sometimes more than thirty, many of them of singular beauty. They sat gossiping upon the stones, looking for the approaching sail, to be ready to go down to the shore and meet the boat. I sometimes seated myself among them, and looked not less eagerly across the bay for the white sail, thinking it might bring for me a letter into this solitude. Almost every one of the young girls had a few flowers in her hand, or a spray of basilicum, as a graceful method of asking alms. Antoniella had the most beautiful bouquet of all, — basilicum, pinks, deep-red roses, and myrtles, tied and adorned with bows of bright-colored ribbon. This bouquet was the token of our friendship, and the key to the most charming house in Anacapri, where I have passed many an hour with these simple children of Nature. Antoniella did her weaving in a room opening on the garden, in the green shadow of grape-vines, and oleanders in full flower; and she was quick and skilful as the spinner Arachne. Her elder sister sat near, weaving a piece of white cotton; but hers was of many gay colors. She did not know how to play upon the jew's-harp, but was so much the more skilful with the ringing tambourine. Her brothers were away upon the sea. The industry of these girls, who are all employed in

weaving, is astonishing. As soon as the sun rises, they are seated at the loom, and, with few interruptions, continue to weave until sunset, — and this from one year's end to the next. It is true that they are not obliged to carry burdens, like their island-sisters in Capri, except when the rain-water in the cisterns gives out: then they must descend the steps, and bring water in vessels from Capri, where flow four slender springs. They all wear ornaments of gold and coral, and silver arrows in their hair; and that girl would be thought unfortunate indeed, who did not possess any such treasure.

There is, belonging to the town, a beautiful Campo Santo, full of flowers and of cypress-trees. But the greatest glory of the inhabitants of Anacapri is its so-called Earthly Paradise; namely, the floor of the church, on whose stones paradise is represented in enamel, — a well-executed work of the seventeenth century, by Chiaese. Here, also, the architecture is of the fantastic Moorish style, and very striking. The farm-houses are also charming, each with its *pergola* attached. There are but few relics of Tiberius in Anacapri. The cultivation of the grape has caused them to be all ploughed up, and there were originally fewer here than in Capri. The most important and interesting ruins are in the plain of Damecuta, — a beauti-

ful region which slopes gently toward the coast, and on the shore of which is the Blue Grotto. It is noticeable, that, in spite of its height, Upper Capri has a lower shore than Lower Capri; for the mountain, with its lofty peaks, sinks in a gradual slope toward the sea, both on the west and on the north. Notwithstanding, the shore is not accessible, either by boat or by the foot of man,—beachless, harborless, and bringing to the shipwrecked sailor only certain destruction.

The Tower of Damecuta happens to be placed where it points out the situation of the now world-renowned Blue Grotto. My host, Michele, told me, at length, the history of the day this discovery was made: he himself, then a boy, was of the expedition. It was his father, Guiseppe, now dead, August Kopisch, the artist Fries, and a sailor named Angelo Ferraro, who undertook to penetrate into the grotto. All are now dead: only Michele remains to tell the history of the discovery. An uncle of Pagano, then a priest upon Capri, warned the party to abstain from the enterprise; since the cave was the abode of evil spirits, and many sea-monsters made it their home. The entrance was also very difficult; since, at the time of the discovery, there was not a single small boat upon the island. Angelo effected an entrance with

the aid of a cask. Kopisch and Fries swam. My host described to me in the most graphic manner the tumultuous joy of both artists when they were fairly inside of the grotto. Fries, he said, was so beside himself with delight, that he swam in and out, shouting and hurrahing. August Kopisch could not rest until he had hastened to Naples, and brought his friends back with him; and he kept going back and forth on this errand. Pagano preserves, like a relic, an old register of visitors, in which, under the date Aug. 17, 1826, Kopisch has written the following account of the discovery:—


“To all lovers of the beauties and wonders of nature, I here give notice of the grotto discovered, from information given by our host Guiseppe Pagano, by Herr Fries, said Guiseppe Pagano, and myself, which has for centuries not been entered, on account of superstitious fears. At present, the entrance is practicable only for a good swimmer. If the sea is perfectly quiet, it is possible to make the entrance in a small boat; but this is dangerous, since the slightest breeze would render egress impossible. We have named this grotto ‘The Blue Grotto,’ because the light passing through the deep sea-water lights up the whole chamber with a blue color. It is a remarkable phenomenon, the water seeming to fill the grotto

with blue fire. Every wave appears like a flame. At the back part of the grotto is an old passage leading into the rock, perhaps to the Tower of Damecuta, above, where tradition reports that young maidens were formerly imprisoned by Tiberius; and it is possible that this grotto was his secret landing-place. Until now, only a sailor and a donkey-leader have had the courage to undertake this enterprise, since all kinds of fables about the cave are current. I, however, advise every one to come to an understanding beforehand with these two in regard to terms. Our host, whom I can recommend, on account of his knowledge of the island, is to have a very small boat built, so that an entrance can more easily be effected. At present, it can only be recommended to good swimmers. It is most beautiful in the morning, because in the afternoon the light is stronger, and the mysterious charm thereby diminished. The picturesque effect will be increased, if the visitor can, like ourselves, carry with him into the cave burning torches."

Thus speaks Kopisch. He has left this magnificent memorial of himself to the island; and I feel as if the wonderful grotto were the property of Germany, and a type of the German mind. In this place I mingle, with the thought of this poet-

painter, memories of Tieck, Novalis, Fouqué, Arnim, Brentano (now all gone to their rest), down to Eichendorff and Heine, the last enchanted princes of this school of poesy. We will therefore, as pilgrims, pour upon the graves of these dead poets a libation of the blue fire-water of Capri; for they all dreamed of this grotto, and it is right that the glory of its discovery should be granted only to a poet and a painter of the same century with those who sought the blue magical flower of Poesy in the depths of the sea with Undine, or with the goddess Venus among the mountains, or in the subterranean grottoes of Isis: they were all, great and small, lovely children, boys with the wonder-horn. Their high priest Novalis is a pale, beautiful youth, who has put on the long priestly robes of an ancestor, and speaks mystical words of wisdom, while no one knows whence the child has learned it. The muse of this band of poets is a siren: she lives in the Blue Grotto of Capri, the island of the fearful Tiberius. They have all heard her heart-stirring song; but not one of them has found her: they have all sought her, and have all died of longing for the blue magic flower. Goethe prophesied of them in his "Fischer:" —

"Halb zog' sie ihn, halb sank' er hin,
Und ward nicht mehr geseh'n."



And now that the blue magic flower, that is the blue, enchanted grotto, for that was the unknown mystery, is found, the spell is broken, and no song of the romantic school will again be heard in Germany.

When I entered the grotto, I felt as if I had gone back into one of those fairy-tales in which we live as children. Daylight and the upper world have suddenly disappeared ; and you find yourself in the hollow earth, in the midst of a twilight of blue fire. The waves cast up sparkling, pearly drops, as if thousands of shining sapphires, red rubies, and carbuncles, were thrown up from the depths. The walls are of a ghostly and mysterious blue, like the palaces of fairies. A sense of foreign substance and spirit pervades the place, making it in the strangest way at once mysterious and familiar. All is silent, as if in a world of shadows : no one ventures to speak. First comes a cry of admiration, then perfect stillness ; and the only sound is the dipping of the oar, or the rippling of the waves, which weave wreaths of phosphorescent light on the rocky walls. The blue water is irresistibly alluring : it rouses an intense desire to plunge therein, and sink, drowning, into a sea of light. I have seen upon a Greek vase a figure of a siren, a very beautiful figure, raising both arms,

white as lilies, while she laughs, and strikes together two shining brass cymbals : thus do the sirens rise in this cave out of the waves of blue fire, strike their cymbals, laughing, and dive into the waves, and rise again. But they can be seen only by little children, and by men and women born on Sunday.

The wealth of this island in grottoes is truly surprising, — land-grottoes and sea-grottoes of singular forms, and all beautiful : there are so many, that it is impossible to learn to know them all. I have penetrated into more than fifteen of these grottoes, and have discovered one, on the southern coast of the island, which has almost the same effect of blue light that is seen in the Grotta Azzura. Others have a green light, caused by the materials of which the earth is composed, shining like whitish phosphorescent fire, especially in the Grotto Verde, the finest grotto in Capri, from its beautiful arched form and the magnificent rocky peaks that surround it. It is not quite a subterranean grotto, but has a passage through the rock, from one side to the other. Some of these grottoes have names, as Marmolata, Marinella : others are nameless. Without claiming the distinction of being a discoverer of grottoes, I had the pleasure of naming all those nameless ones which I visited. And so I alone know how beautiful it is in the Grotto Stella di Mare ; in the won-

derful Grotto Euphorion, adorned with seaweed ; in the Grotto of the Sea-spider, whose walls are yellow, and whose stones, where they are washed by the waves, glimmer with white, velvet-green, and rose-color. In one grotto was a sound of waves lapsing, and beating against the rocks in rhythmical cadence, so that I consecrated it to the Eumenides. The grottoes lie all along, from the shore near Solaro, out beyond the Faraglioni, scarcely visible from without, so that their opening often escapes the superficial glance ; but within, high-vaulted, dark, and their silent waters inhabited by crabs, sea-urchins, and star-fish, — a mysterious band of hermits.

It is well worth while to make the circuit of the whole island : for this, only three hours are needed, and some of the grottoes may also be visited in this space of time. The western coast has not the same formation as the others, having no caves nor grottoes ; for here the shore sinks down from Solaro between the Capes Punta di Vitareto and Punta di Carena. It sends out three low, rugged promontories, Campetiello, Pino, and Orica, which are protected with fortifications. This is the spot where the Muratists climbed the rocks by night. But, in rowing past the promontory of Carena, you pass a spot where the southern shore becomes suddenly

of immense height, and very steep : the rocks rise in tall gigantic forms, perpendicularly from the watery mirror, shooting upward into the clouds, which surround their summits with mist. This is the formation of the southern coast as far as Punta Tragara ; and the eastern coast is not less sublime and fantastic, stretching as far as Lo Capo, the north-east cape of the island. Here the shore abounds in caves full of stalactitic formations.

Now let us ascend the highest peak of Capri, Mount Solaro. If you climb up from Anacapri, painfully scrambling over the pathless rocks, you reach at last the crest of the mountain. The shape, indeed the whole aspect of the mountain, is very striking ; for it sinks precipitately from its very summit, forming a dried-up, brown plain, — the roof of that wall of rock which hangs over Capri. Upon this brown heath you walk, between rough blocks of limestone ; and every step disturbs swarms of brown grasshoppers, which cover the ground in countless numbers. On the very edge of this plain, above this frightful precipice, clings the cell of the hermit of Anacapri, and I never saw a hermitage which was one so completely. The entrance to the cell is through the old chapel. I found all the doors open, and the hermit not at home. His cowl hung over the wall of his little garden ; over

his bed a picture of St. Antony of Padua, a consecrated olive-twigg, and a wreath of roses ; in his storeroom, the Madonna Dolorosa, weeping, just above a heap of onions, and near by a basket of bread, and two empty plates.

In the Campo Santo of Pisa I had seen that curious and fanciful old fresco-painting of Ambrogio and Piero Lorenzetti, which represents the life of a hermit in the wilderness, and found something akin to that picture here produced in real life. I am convinced that this old hermit preaches every Friday to the fishes, like St. Antony, who may be seen, in a painting in Rome, standing on a rocky cliff, and preaching down into the sea. The stupid fishes stretch their heads up out of the water, with wide-opened mouths. As I was looking about the cell, the old man entered, — a lay-brother. He carried on his shoulder a bundle of brush-wood. He seemed very glad to find a guest, and apologized for having no wine to offer me. He had lived for thirty-two years in this cell, and limps somewhat, the effect of mountain-climbing, — not club-footed and Mephistophelian, like the Tiberius hermit, but gentle and friendly, like the saints and the Indian gods.

Above his dizzy cell rises the summit of Solaro, the highest peak of Capri, and, as before related,

the watch-tower of a lonely man, who spends his life looking for sails. When you have labored up to this point, you enjoy the reward of Hercules ; for here lies the whole island spread out at your feet, — a cosmos of wonderful beauty. And this is the horizon that meets the eye, — on the south the boundless sea : toward the west and north the islands of Ponza, the high peaks of Ischia, the island of Vivara, the gentle slopes of Procida ; behind them, dreamy and distant, the mountains of Gaëta and Terracina, with the Cape of Circe ; farther, the mountain pyramids of Misenum, at the foot of which Tiberius was murdered ; the shores of Cimbria and of the Elysian Fields ; the blue coasts of Baïæ and Pozzuoli ; Cumæ, with the mountains of Gaurus and of Solfaterra ; the castle-crowned island of Nisida ; the slender Pausilippo ; the sharp peak of Camaldoli ; the far mountains of Capua ; then the gleaming shore of Naples, a long line from the city to Torre del Greco ; the two-peaked, smoking Vesuvius above Pompeii, and behind it the beautiful mountains of Sarno and Nocera, with their wealth of spurs and gorges : to the east the brown, sharply-chiselled coast of Massa, with the capes of Sorrento and Minerva ; behind, the gigantic mountain St. Angelo ; farther still, the Rocks of the Sirens, and the high,

mountainous shores of Amalfi and Salerno; and last, far away, the white, distant mountains of Calabria, Pæstum, — a mere line of shore, — and Cape Licosa, in Lucania.

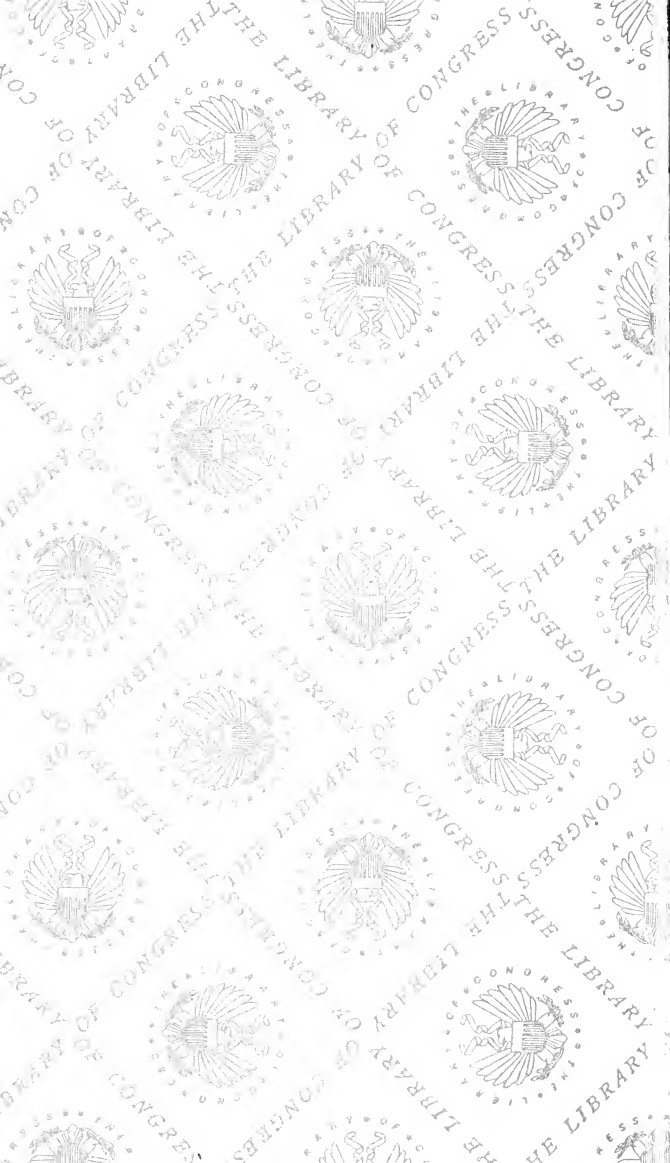
On such a height, and gazing at this far-distant horizon, we receive a consciousness of the boundless possibilities of human life; for the ordinary routine of existence is fearfully narrow, and small things — call them by whatever name you please — press so closely on us, that there is a constant, petty, painful struggle for larger opportunities. For all education consists in widening the horizon: its best reward is a glimpse of the heights of Culture, where the arts and sciences — all that has been seen, thought, lived — form themselves, according to divine law, into a far-reaching cosmic circle. On the summit of Solaro I thought of Humboldt: I thought how, before his mind, the whole world lies spread out, as beautiful as this landscape, and as clearly defined; and I also thought of Pliny, the Humboldt of the Romans, as I looked at the mountains of Misenum and of Vesuvius; and of Aristotle, that truly cosmic mind, who classified all human knowledge.

But we, satisfied and glad to have once beheld with the eyes of the body this vast panorama of nature, descend the mountain, for the sun is setting

behind Ischia. Already the broad sea glows in the west, a deep crimson ; and the Rock of Ponza, which rises out of the waves, far and beautiful, as if it lay in another sphere of light and space, is all glowing and glimmering with transparent crimson fire. And so, farewell to the Island of Hermits, — beautiful Capri !

H144

79





MAR 79



N. MANCHESTER,
INDIANA 46962

